

Sovereign Omnipotency
The SAINT's
SECURITY
IN
Evil Days.

Discoursed and Concluded
From *Rom. IV. xvii, xviii.*

By *WILLIAM CROMPTON.*

*Exod. 14. 13. Stand still, and see the salvation of God.
2 Chron. 20. 12. O our God, wilt Thou not judge
them? for we have no might against this great
Company that cometh against us, neither know we
what to do, but our Eyes are upon thee.*

*London: Printed for Benj. Alsop, at the Angel and
Bible in the Poultry; and are to be sold by
James Comsey, Bookseller in Exeter. 1682.*

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

2nd MAR 1881

Y T 11

SION COLLEGE
LIBRARY.

*Dignissimo, Amicissimoque
Affini nostro,*

GEORGIO YONG,

Creditonensium,

In Agro Devonienſi Armigero :

Nec-non

GEORGIO LAPTHORN,

Plymidensium,

Mercatori Celeberrimo :

Nomine Virtutis non mihi solum noto :

Utrisque Sacrarum Literarum

Patronis Candidissimis.

Conciones sequentes, tum Potentiæ

Divinæ summe efficacis, æque

*ac Justitiæ illius omnimodo
incontaminabilis,*

Doctrinam Dilucidantes :

D. D. D.

Fausta que iisdem omnia, non mi-

nus calido voto, quam ipsimet,

in hoc scripto ~~reperitur~~

comprecatur ;

Guliel. Crompton.



Sovereign Omnipotency
 THE
 SAINTS SECURITY
 In Evil Days.

ROM. iv. 17, 18.

*Even God who quickneth the dead,
 and calleth those things that are
 not, as though they were.*

T His part of the Chapter contains an Illustrious Commendation of Renowned *Abraham*, and that Faith whereby he received the Promise to be the Father of many Nations; and is described three ways, viz.

A 3

1. By

1. By the nature of it, which he discovers to be *sincere* ; not only outwardly profest, (though that was necessary) but inwardly rooted. It was Faith *before God*, and found Access into the Divine Presence.

2. By the *extent* of the Relation between *Abraham* and the Faithful ; and so, it is defined to be *Universal*, as God is Father of all, *Jews and Gentiles*, without distinction of Nation, Sex and Condition. *Spiritual*, before him whom he believed ; not *Carnal*, nor apprehended by men without a Revelation, 1 Cor. 2. 14. *The Natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, for they are Spiritually discern'd.*

3. From the *ground* of both, which is the Sovereignty and Almighty power of God ; set forth by two things, *viz. Quickning the Dead, and calling things that are not as though they were.*

This supported *Abrahams* Faith against all seeming Impossibilities ; and is the intended subject of this Discourse. In the Prosecution of which, I shall labour first to break the Shell, by explaining the words, as they sh^{ll} fall

fall under consideration, and then offer you the Kernel contained in it ; First I shall endeavour to unlock the Cabinet and then shew you the rich Jewels laid up in it ; which you will find to be of great worth and use in these Cloudy days, wherein the Divine Providence hath cast us.

For the former Branch ; 1. *Gods quickning the Dead.*

A Short Sentence and diversly understood by divers Divines. I conceive, the *Resurrection* is hereby meant, present in Soul, future of Body ; with some special Limitation to *Abraham*. As,

1. A raising of such a Seed out of his dead Body. *Rom. 4. 19. And being not weak in Faith, he considered not his own Body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarahs Womb.* i. e. Destitute of all natural power to conceive and quicken. Yet *Abraham* could set his Seal to it, by Faith, as being within the Limits of Gods power.

2. A recovering of that Seed alive from the dead, *Heb. 11. 19. Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the Dead, from whence also*

A 4 he

he received him in a Figure ; which to nature and humane apprehension was impossible. Yet this *Abraham* believed, because of the Lords *All-sufficiency*.

3. A reviving of the Body out of the Dust, at the last *Day* : which *Abraham* believed the Lord was able, and would certainly do it.

The whole commends two things to our Learning.

First, *To quicken the Dead, is the Lords priviledge, an effect of his Almighty Power.*

Secondly, *That this Divine Priviledge should be to us a Ground of Faith.*

For the former. See it promised, *Isa. chap. 26. ver. 19. Thy Dead Men shall Live, together with my Dead Body shall they Arise.* To be understood either in a Physical or Moral Sense ; with the Concurrent Consent of the Ancient and Learned Modern Expositors ; who observe, that there is nothing more usual for the Church, and Holy Men therein, to Support their Hearts above all Incumbent Afflictions, and to Secure themselves of the Comfort of promised Deliverance, notwithstanding all the seeming Improbable.

probability thereof, by the General Doctrine of the Resurrection. And so, *John 5, 21, 28. The Father raiseth up the Dead and Quickneth them, even so the Son quickneth whom he will.* On which Account Christ is declared to be the Son of God, by the Resurrection from the Dead; *R m. 1. 4. First, Raising others; as he did the Ruler's Daughter, to the Astonishment of all Beholders present at her Funeral; and the Widow's Son of Naim, who was carried without the City to his Grave; Christ stops the sad Train, and Restoreth Life to the Young Man, and somewhat more Dear than Life to his Mother. And the more Signally to Triumph over Death, he Pursued it to its Fort, the Obscurity of the Grave. Lazarus was buried for four Daies, his Carcase was Corrupt, but Christ called him from the Bottom of his Tomb with that Powerful Voice that Created the World; The Dead Answers and comes forth to the Amazement of all that saw the Glory of God, so Clearly Manifested. In all, he Testified his Godhead, and the Truth of his Calling and Doctrine. Thus he raised Moses and Elias, and made them*

them known to his Disciples by extraordinary Revelation, to Evince his Doctrine not to be new, but the same in Substance with that Recorded in the *Law and the Prophets*; both being represented by *Moses and Elias*; who though they were raised before him, yet it was not without him, but by the *Fellowship of his Resurrection*: As, though Light Riseth before the Sun, yet it Riseth not but by the Sun; and the Mace goeth before the Magistrate, but it doth so only to attend upon him.

Secondly, Raising himself. *John 10, 18. I have laid down my Life, that I might take it again, no Man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my self; I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to Raise it up again.* Here is a glorious Manifestation of his Power, that the Tomb could not Confine him, nor the Grave-Stone stay him; But throwing off those Clogs, as *Samson* did his *Wicks*, he snewed himself a while to his Beloved Ones, and so took his Joyous Ascent to the Right hand of the Father. As *Love* Laid Christ in the Grave, so *Power* Raised him from the Grave. *Love*
Rockt

Rockt him a Sleep, and *Power* Awak-
ed him again. He broke through all
Bars, Beat down all Opposition, and
Sprang forth of his yeilding Dust, as
a Triumphant Conqueror over Death
and Devils.

If it be objected, *That Christ rose
from the Dead by the Glory of the Fa-
ther, and that the Father raised him?*

It is easily answered; This was not
by way of supplement, to make up a-
ny defect of power in Christ, but on-
ly by way of consent, to Christs own
Power and Action; that so men might
Honour the Son and the Father. *John.*
5. 19, 26. Or else, by the *Glory of
the Father*, we may understand that
Glorious Power which the Father
gave unto the Son in the Flesh, to have
life from himself; because that holy
Spirit which immediatly quickned
him, was both his and the Fathers; and
so the Action was common to both.
Thus like the *Premix*, he goeth out of
the S pulcher in the day of his Tri-
umphs, al lighted and environ'd with
Flames of Triumphant Glory.

3. Assuring others, by his lights and
shen or, that they shall rise again.

1. *Cor.* 6. 14. He is called the *first*
fruits

Fruits of them that Sleep. The Triumphant Resurrection of our Lord, is the Root and Hope of ours; with this he sweetens the acerbities of our present life, and replenisheth Hearts with the Antipast of their Immortality; for, he arose not barely in a Personal, but Publick Capacity; and though it were a Damnable Heresy of *Hymeneus*, to say, *That the Resurrection was past already*; Yet it is a truth to say, that it is begun. He first, and *we at his coming*, 1 Cor. 15. 25. By what is past in the head, we are assured of what is expected in his Members; for, his Resurrection is a Pledge and Earnest of theirs. He having paid our Debt, Death cannot detain us in Prison for it. Yea, it is a beginning of ours, as before is noted; he being raised who is the Head, the Body must also follow. If the Elder Brother be sprung out of the Dust, the Younger Brethren shall not stay there. The Vine-Plant being in Heaven, there the Branches must receive their Eternal Flourish.

Object. 1. Is it not said, 1. Cor. 15.
2. *By men came the Resurrection of the Dead?*

Ans.

A. It is *θεάνθρωπος*, such a man as is God also; from whose Will this large Soul of Nature had its motion, and who therein commandeth so universally, as he seems to hold the Heaven and Elements under here, to be instruments of his Wonders; it is he that lighted Stars at his Birth, and Eclipsed the Ancient Sun at his Death, and walked on the waters as on a Pavement of Marble. It is he, that causeth the *Earth to cast out her Dead.*

Object. 2. *Have not men done it?*

Answer. 1. Stories of Men Raised by Men, are either Lies and Illusions, as the Pythonist of *Endor* raised the Devil in *Samuels* Shape; and the Church of *Rome* maintain many Idle Stories of Dead men Raised, to Walk and Live after Death. Otherways, Dead Men neither walk nor appear in Body or Soul, after Death. Or, if there are any such, They are extraordinary Permissions, for Secret Ends, only known to him that Permits them.

2. The Prophets and Apostles have done it, but in the Quality of Ministers. So *Elisha* raised the *Shunamites* Son, 2. *Kings* 4. 34. And *Peter* raised
ed

ed *Dorcas*, *Acts* 9. 40. But not by their own Power. It only belongs to Christ to do this work, with an *Original Power*, which hath its Fountain in his Bosom; with an *Absolute Command*, which receives no Modification in all Nature; with a *Simple Will*, which needs no other Instrument. It was by Divine Influence and Assistance in those Prophets and Apostles, to confirm their Doctrine, and to draw the Church sooner to believe.

3. It is the Divine Nature that is the Fountain of Life; he gives, takes, restores, to whom, when, and how he pleaseth. As it is with the Sea for water and the Sun for light, in the former, all the waters are gathered together into an Ocean, where they grow into swelling heaps, and are the source of all the Streams that refresh the Earth; and in the latter, that great Luminarie is the Vessel, wherein the Lord hath gathered all light, which before was scattered in the Heavens, but is now united in that bright Lamp, which, running like a fiery Chariot, might rule the day, and illustrate the earth, making it fruitful. Thus it is with the Deity for life, *John* 6. 63.

The

The Spirit quickneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing; The words that I speak unto you are Spirit and Life. And by this power he quickneth the Dead. So that it's clear, the work is his, who is Lord of nature, and holds the Keys of life and death in his own hands. His light only can dispel the darkness, and his voice only can break the silence of the Grave.

The second Doctrine comes now to hand, viz.

Doct. 2. *That this Divine Privilege should be to us a ground of Faith.*

Gen. 17. 1. *I am God all-sufficient, walk before me, &c.* Walk before me who am all-sufficient, self-sufficient, Original, Universal Good; the Pillar of *Abrahams* Faith. And the Apostle speaks by way of wonder that any should not believe it, *Acts. 26. 8. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, That God should raise the Dead?* Therefore it is that the Sacred Scripture doth frequently mind us of his power, to help our incredulitie; *Numb. 23. 19. God is not as man, that he should lie, nor the Son of man, that he should repent; hath he said it, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall*

shall he not make it good? And again, Is there any thing too hard for God? So, Math. 19. 27. With God all things are possible. A main prop to an humble Suppliant, That seeing his own vile-ness, and the Divine Excellencies, which are warming and enlightning, cryeth out, *Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean,* as it is recorded, *Math. 8.*

2. This is the Rock, on which the weak Anchor of a Christians Faith may firmly fix. You know *Sampsons Riddle; Out of the Eater cometh forth Sweet.* The reason why Christians should consider the power of God; out of this strong comes forth sweetness,

In the application hereof may be found,

Use 1. Matter of *Correction*, and that of two sorts:

First, of such that make it too hard; denying the Resurrection in *opinion*. As Pearls are dissolved in Vinegar, so is Truth in hearts made bitter with Corruption. Thus we find many wicked and irregular Spirits, who having renounced the blessings of the other life, against the voice of nature in the order of the World, wherein we have
the

the New Birth of Stars, days, Seasons, Plants and Birds, who make a perpetual Image of the *Resurrection* in the World; nay, against the touch of God, and impressions of verity on the very Gentiles, who have professed the happiness of the Soul in the other life and the *Resurrection*, even on their Tombs, to deny the *Resurrection*. So the *Saduces* of old, *Acts* 23. 8. *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, *2 Tim.* 18. which you may easily perceive, is not only to crack the eye of a reasonable judgment, but also to pull out the eye of Faith, all pure and celestial as it is.

Or, in *practice*; Let us eat and *drink* for to morrow we shall die, *1 Cor.* 15. 32. Of those, I mean, who drown their Souls in their Bodies and would have no time to live longer, than they have to sin, and when there is an end of sinning, wish there would be an end of living. And well it would be for them, if living like Beasts, they might be annihilated like Beasts. Thus men do err, not knowing the power of God. That God, who out of nothing Created all things, can certainly reduce many things into one. When the Body is gone into a thousand substances

stances, he can easily make an abstraction, and bring that Body together again; as a Chymist, out of several Metals mingled together can abstract one from the other, the Silver from the Gold, and the Alchimy from the Silver, and reduce every Metal to its own kind. Thus should we much more believe of God, that he is able to extract and reinvest every Soul with its own Body, though they are mingled and confounded with many other Substances.

The Persecutors of the Primitive Christians burnt their Bodies into Ashes and cast them into the River, and all, *ad tollendam spem Resurrectionis*; but all in vain, for even they also shall arise to a better Resurrection; for, at the Shrill Voice of the last Trumpet, the greatest Jaylors shall surrender up all their Prisoners; all the scatter'd Dust of *Adams* Seed shall ride upon Windy Wings, till it meet together in a collected Body. All the Creatures in the world, that have made their Meat of mans flesh, shall finde that they have eaten Morsels too hard for the digestion of their weak Stomach, *Isa. 26. 19. The earth shall*

shall cast forth her Dead, as a woman doth an untimely Birth; the *Grave* shall be in travel with the Dead, and shall be delivered of them.

Secondly, Such as make this work too easie, saying they can quicken themselves; against all sense and common reason. It is to maintain a proposition ridiculous to all humane understanding. Can any thing make it self? neither can any reasonable Creature raise it self to an higher rank of being than it is. A Stone cannot make it self a Tree, to have growth and life; nor can a Tree make it self a Beast, to have sense, nor a Beast make it self a man to have Reason, nor a Rational man make himself a Saint. Or else, ascribe it to the Ordinary course of Nature, depriving the Lord of his Royal Prerogative.

Use 2. Here is matter offered of strong consolation and encouragement to the holy seed of *Abraham*; you believe in him who can quicken the dead. For your sakes, let me take leave, a little to open this Cabinet, that you may view the excellency of this powerful God in whom you believe; and be sure the prospect will be very pleasing.

Death, and so the Dead, may be considered three ways:

1. *Politice*; There is a Death of Kingdomes and States; as there is a rising and flourishing, so there is a decaying and dying, they spring, flourish and dye; the goodliest, and stateliest Politick Bodies that ever the earth bore, though animated with the searching Spirit of the most profound Politie, strengthened with the resolution and valour of the most Unconquer'd, sighted with Eagles eyes, of largest depths, and comprehensions of States and Crowns, adorned with never so many prosperities, and Triumphs; yet like the natural Body of a man, they have their revolutions and decays. Most apparent, in the ruines of the *Roman* Empire, once a glorious Body; and the once splendor of the *Turkish* Monarchie, and the *Venetian* Aristocracy, which sprang from the most contemptible beginning; with the *Spanish* State, which once appear'd like a Comet, threatening destruction and giving Laws to all the Nations round about her. The Beams and Rasters of a State may be so link'd together, so tenton'd and fet into one another

another, as might embolden a bare Politician to determine it an indissoluble Constitution: But God undermines all, with the Breath of his Mouth. And Politicians have observed, that the longest liv'd State on Earth, suffers great alterations and Periods within the compass of four or five hundred years.

This decay is, 1. In matters *Eccllesiastical*, concerning Religion. As the Church prays, *Psalms*. 80. 18. *Quicken us, we call upon thee*. And the power of Christ Shines marvellously in the great Empire of his Church, which the Father hath put into his hands, to build, raise and cement with his Blood, illuminate with his Light, and nourish with his Body. To confirm which, the Historian hath observ'd, how the Doctrine of the *Albigenses* was preserved, notwithstanding all enemies; and he bids all the Privy Counsellours of Nature, who can tell where the Swallows lie all the Winter, and how at the Spring they have a Resurrection from their seeming deadness; Let them, saith he, also inform us, in what invisible Sanctuary, this Doctrine did lurk, in spite of all opposition and Persecution;

secution ; and how it reviv'd out of its Ashes, at the coming of *Luther*. And withal he observes, that in those parts of *France*, where the *Albigenses* were most cruelly handled, now the Protestants (the Heirs of most of their Tenents) most Flourish.

2. In matters *Civil*, touching the Law and matter of Government ; as the Lord promised, *Isa. 26. 19. Thy Dead Body shall live, &c.* Before, they complain'd of very hard labour, and that they brought forth nothing but Wind ; now, *thy Dead Body shall Live.* Which some refer to the *Babylonish Captivity*, wherein they were as *Dead Bones* in the Grave, without any Strength, Wisdom, or visible hope of being delivered ; yet though they seem'd so very much decayed, as if they were quite withered and Consumed with Calamity and Death, he promised to raise them again, and Cloath them with Beauty and Glory. Thus the Lord quickens the Dead. He burn his Phenix, out of the very Ashes he will raise another.

2. *Physice* ; And that is the Death of the Body, of which we have spoken already. *The Earth sh. ll cast forth her Dead.*

Dead. This is easie to God, to whom Miracles are as easie as natural operations. A Miracle being nothing else but a new Creation.

3. *Ethice*; Which is the Death of the Soul; Two fold, *First*, Temporary; either by the absence of Grace or Divine Discretion; when Man is indeed Dead, or as a dead thing, in his own apprehension, the *Lord quickneth. You who were Dead he quickneth.* Man is Impotent and weak, like a dead Member in the Body, he is in himself *without Strength*: And as the Organs can make no sound, unless Breath be caused to enter into them, so neither can a dead Soul make any Harmony, till God breathe into it, by his Blessed Spirit. *Secondly*, Eternal, when the person is actually cut off from all hope, and irrecoverably shut up in the eternal Abyss. So, the Lord doth not, he will not quicken, *Luke 16. 26.* There is a great Gulf, a Diamond Wall between Hell and Paradise, so that they who pass from earth to Hell cannot return, &c. *Tali privatione non Datur Progressus*; That Gulf being fixed by the immutable and immoveable Decree of God.

B +

Q. *How*

Q. *How doth the Lord quicken the Dead?*

Ans. 1. By ordering all that falls out in the World, for the good of his People, *Ezek. 37. 12, 13.* Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my People, I will open your Graves, and cause you to come out of your Graves, and bring you into the Land of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your Graves, O my People, and brought you up out of your Graves.

When things were brought to a dead Lift, then he puts to his hand, his Strength is made known; and when the danger is most felt, then his helping Arm is most welcome. When the Daughter of the Ruler of the Synagogue was dead, then Christ appeared most advantageously, *Mark 5.* That was the word he waited for, and longed to hear. As *Alexander* the Great solaced himself with the greatness of his Peril in *India*, *Tard in par Animo meo periculum video*; So fareth it with our absolute Monarch of the World, it is Joy to his heart to protract his time, till he see the height and maturity of danger, that so he may get the more honour. While things are but dying, there is hope

hope in nature, and in respect of us; but when they are quite *dead*, there is hope, if we look up to God, and believe him *who quickneth the Dead*. We need not meddle with the great Current of his Counsels; his Power in the object of our Faith. He can make light in the midst of duskie Nights, and Havens in the most forlorn Shipwrack; and if we were with him in the Shadow of Death, what should we fear in the Arms of Life?

2. By infusing Grace and working Life. The Method or order he observes is, *First*, to kill by the Law, and then to quicken by the Gospel. *First*, he Wounds, and *then* Heals; He useth Rods, but such as are dipt in Balm. And so the Lord quickens daily, and often works a Miracle; and this in bestowing Power upon his Son to quicken; and those are by degrees drawn by Christ to himself, and united to him by Life Communicated to them. As the Soul resides in the heart, re-
tains its exercise in self, and sends forth Spirit into every united part, he woe which and the whole there is continuing, *John 5. 25. Verily I say unto you, The Hour is coming and*

now

now is, when the Dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, they shall hear and Live. John 14. and 19. Because I live, ye shall live also.

3. By returning every Body his own Spirit. *Ezek. 37. 5. I will cause Breath to enter into you, and ye shall live.* The same Body that dies shall rise again. According to the hope of blessed Souls, who after the Vision of God, do yet hope for the Resurrection of their Bodies, to which they most ardently wish to be reunited. As they, who are represented under the Altar, *Revel. 6.* and at the Tribunal of Justice, ask vengeance of their Blood, are instantly Cloathed with *White Garments*, in Token of that bright Flesh, which is to be joyned to their Immortal Spirits. However some have conceived, that the Soul shall be cloathed with a new Body; which if it should be granted, what would the Resurrection be, but a new Creation?

This Doctrine of the Resurrection, is such, that it is too deep for Reason to wade, you must let Faith swim. It is infinitely above Reason to imagine, and we have scarce Faith enough
to

to believe it. Have an Eye to Christ, rest on the Almighty Power. And so let me add in the next place.

3. An Use of *Instruction*, and that in two things.

First, Never to *dispair*,

1. Not of the State, should that be as low as *Israel*, *Ezek.* 37. 11, 12. *Son of Man, those Bones are the House of Israel, behold, they say our strength is dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts; Therefore Prophecy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your Graves, and cause you to come up out of your Graves, and bring you into the Land of Israel.* Though things seem to Humane Apprehension, helpless and hopeless, look up to the Supream Power, who can, beyond all our thoughts, make those who dwell in the Dust, to awake and Sing. This Doctrine speaks good news in that respect. There is *Balmin Gilead*, and a Physician to heal, and this Physician yet dwelleth in our Hemisphere, with Healing under his Wings. Despair not, though it be brought so low as the Disciples, *John* 21. 5. *who had no Meat:* This Lord can turn
Stones

Stones into Bread. Let us all pray,
Lord increase our Faith !

2. Despair not of others, who are dead, and have a long time lain in the Grave of Sin. Only speak to and for them ; as *Ezek. 37. 9. Come from the four Winds, O Breath, and breathe upon these Slain, that they may Live.* You that have Sick, Dying, yea, Dead Relations, Children, Servants, Neighbours, Let your Bowels yearn over them ; Lift up a Prayer for them ; the Prayer of Faith may Heal the Sick, and Save a Dead Soul. No better Physick to be given at a Dead Lift, in the most desperate Case, than Prayer. All you that have felt the Disease of Sin, and the Powerful Mercy of Christ, learn to pity others, and hope for their Healing and Quickning. He can turn noisom Dunghills into Mines of Gold, Brands of Hell into Light-som Stars in his Firmament.

3. Despair not of your selves ; though you have no Spiritual Life, but are all over like a Dead Carcass ; yet wait at the gate of this great Physician ; there may be a *Time of Love* come, *Ezek. 16. 6, 8.* He works at all hours. You may Reap if you
Faint

Faint not. *Deus vester est Deus Vivificans.*

Secondly, be Instructed, to prepare dayly for the generall Resurrection, for the coming of the great day of God, wherein he may give you new Bodies, Immortal, Agile, Incorruptible, Priviledged with Favours, and Gilded with the Bright Splendours of the Body of Christ Jesus. You are hastening towards that Eternal Estate every day. Forsake, Forsake the Love of these sleight Cottages, those poor Ant-hills, which Enthral so many Spirits, devested of those Divine Seeds which bud under Generous and Heavenly Breasts.

1. Use the means, and look through them to Christ; still saying, I have a Dead Heart, O Lord, some quickning Grace! Christ is not of more Power then Sympathy. *You hath he quickned, who were Dead.*

2. Be thankful for Spiritual Life, in Possession or Expectation. In this God hath done more for you, than if he had made you Princes of the Earth. In this, he hath done more for you, than if he had made you Angels. O be thankful! God in Quickning you,
hath

hath done more for you, than if he had given you the World. Let your Hearts and Mouths be filled with Praises. It is a Mercy calls for your highest Praises in the Days of Eternity.

THe *Second* Branch of the Text which Illustrates the Omnipotent Sovereignty of Christ, comes next to be Considered, viz.

Calling things that are not, as though they were.

An Effect or peculiar Property of the Deity, whereby God (with special Reference to Christ the Son, who appeared to *Abraham*, and in whom he believing was justified) is described.

The words are few, the Sentence short, and hard to be understood : not how it is a ground of Faith ; that easily follows ; but how *καὶ μὴ ὄντα*, should be in the Divine Understanding *ὡς ὄντα*, how the God of Truth should Congruously and truly call things that are not, as though they were ; this is difficult to conceive.

For the Clearing and Opening of it, to the weak Capacity of man, some have and may, provided it be done with Reverence, Sobriety, and Reference

Reference to the Scripture chiefly (for we cannot speak of God, but as he hath spoken of himself) take Occasion to discourse,

1. Of the Infinite Essence, Comprehending and Representing all that ever should have being, to the Divine Understanding.

2. Of the Infinite Presence, and drawing together the whole Succession of time, as if present ; not Imaginarily but really, and Coexisting with all time. *I am that I am ; i. e.* The Absolute Being, the Independent and first Original of all Essences ; *Jehovah*, the *Alpha* and *Omega*.

But while they have gone about in their own words to bring this Infinite Mystery under mans finite Capacity , they have left it more Obscure. I conceive it safer to be Contented with *Scripture* Phrases , not as Moulded this or that way by humane Reason, but as they lye in the Text, *viz. in Universalibus*, Large and General Expressions, and not descend to curious Particulars ; rather falling under an awful Adoration and Beleif, than an exact Extrance on any such Subject, beyond what we may be assured is Revealed

vealed. This is to be wise to *Sobriety*:
Especially, Considering,

First, Our great Apostles Admiration, *Rom. 11. 33. O the Depth of the Riches of the Wisdom of God!* where observe a Difference between Wisdom and Knowledg. Knowledg is of things to come, though Inconvenient and Disallowed; Wisdom of things convenient and approved. As the excellent Dr. *Twiss*, (*Contr. Jackson*) hath noted. And also his Imposed Silence, *2 Cor. 12. 4. His unspeakable words, not Lawful for any to utter. It is not for you to know -- Acts 1.*

Secondly, The rash and presumptuous Adventure of some School-Divines, who, affecting Novelty and Obscurity, deliver things hard to be understood (if not Impossible to be so) about the Divine Attributes, those scorching and Peircing Beams, that others may fear to hear or read. Such curious Pries there have been into this Ark and Cabinet of Gods Secrets, not measurable by the line of Humane Reason, or fashionable by the Plummet of any Created Understanding. And therefore we should still cry out, with that great Doctor of the Gentiles, *ὁ Βαθὸς!*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Considering how difficult a Passage it is ; Nature helps little ; and God hath spoken little of himself. How dangerous is it to Err ? *Homo sum non Intellego secreta Dei ; Investigare non Audeo ; hoc ipsum Temeritatis genus est :* saith *Salvian, Lib. 3. de Guber. Dei.* And it was a grave and serious Speech of *Seneca*, worthy the Consideration of the greatest Divines, *Nunquam nos Verecundiores esse debemus, quam de Deo Agitur.* It should not seem strange, if stricken with those Rayes which dazle the Eyes of Seraphins, we yeild to his Greatness, and discourse in the Secret Mysteries of the Scripture, with great Moderation, and take heed that neither our Thoughts nor Tongues proceed any further, than the Bounds of Gods word do extend. We should be willing to be Ignorant, where our great Master would not let us know. And, *Nescire velle quæ Magister maximus nos scire non vult, Erudita Inscitia est :* as *Scaliger* hath expressed it. To all which I shall add that weighty Consideration of Renowned *Calvin*, who, *Lib. 1. Instit: cap. 13. Sect. 21.* Speaks to this Effect, How may the

Mind define the Immeasurable Essence of God unseen? and therefore with *Moulin, Hæc Perobscura sunt, et iimide et Religiose Tranctanda.*

I shall therefore in handling this Text before us, do, as Men use to do in great Rivers or deep Waters, keep close to the shoar, and Labour to have firm ground to walk by, both in Explaining and after in concluding those plain Truths thence arising, most useful for us.

For Explication, we may take Notice of three things.

1. The Subject, implied, *He*; the Messiah, the Mediator. *Christ* was he that appeared to *Abraham*; *Christ* it was in whom he believed. He gave being to things that had no beings in the Creation. He blew the Universe into an Existency by the Breath of his Mouth, and by his *Fiat* reared the Heaven and Earth with all therein; and he preserveth them in being, and Restoreth them in and by the Resurrection. An Invincible Argument of Christs Divinity against the *Arrians* and *Servetians*, with other Enemies, who will not that *Christ* should Reign over them, and will not Honour

Honour him with any personal Existence, till he was born into the world of the *Virgin-Mary*; they not being able to bear so Resplendent a Light, have endeavour'd to obscure it by the Fumes of their Brains.

2. The *Work, Call*. Taken especially three wayes in the Holy Scriptures: And so

1. For the Knowledge of God, *Isa.* 42. 6. *I the Lord have called them in Righteousness.* Chap. 43. 1. *Fear not O Jacob, I have Redeemed thee, I have called thee by my Name, נקרא, Vocavit,* is used in both Texts. And so in the 147 *Psal.* 4. *He telleth the Number of the Stars, he calleth them all by Name.*

And this, either of things in *Act*, that have been or shall be; called *Scientiam Puræ Visionis*; or of things Possible; Called *Scientiam pro Simplicis Intelligentia*, so far as they are knowable.

2. It is taken for the *Power* of God calling: *i. e.* Causing not only things that have no actual Existence, to appear as being; but giving them being in time. So, in the Creation he called for Light, *Fiat*, and there was

Light ; and so of other things ; he calleth them into being, by his Noble and Divine manner of working, which the Scripture calleth Creation, bringing them from *not being* to a *being*, producing the matter of which they consist, preparing and fitting it, as now it is, Investing it with all those Forms and Admirable Qualities, on which all the Motions of their Nature do depend. And else-where, it is said, *he called for Famine and the Sword* i. e. he Commanded and Effectually Caused them, *Psal. 105. 16. Jer. 25. 29.*

3. It is taken for the *Manifestation* of both, in dispensing Means and disposing his Creature, according to the Right and Dominion he hath over them as Creatures. *Rom. 8. 30. & 9. I will call them my People which were not my People &c.*

3. Here is the *Effect* of this Word *τὰ μὴ ὄντα*, &c. *Things that are as though they were.* Not beings as a manner, are caused to be.

While some understand it of the first, others of the Second, I cannot see Reason, why we may not understand it of all. And so they offer too Consideration,

1. The Omniscieney of Christ Jesus, our Mediatour.

2. The Omnipotency of our God, in whom we believe.

First, *The Omniscieney of Christ Jesus our Mediatour.* He calleth, i. e. by his Knowledge foreseeing all things presented, as if actually existing before him; not as existing or being in the Divine Nature. (as *Aquinas* held their real existence in Eternity, confuted by *Scotus*,) except by way of Eminency : but as to exist in time, according to the Will and Wisdom of the Creator, *Psal.* 139. 2. *Thou knowest my down-suting and my up-ri-sing, thou understandest my Thoughts a far off :* and Verse 6. *Such Knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is high, I cannot attain it :* i. e. his Omniscieney. Unto which add, (lest any should conceive this to be verified of God the Father only) *John* 21. 17. *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee,* Spoken of Christ.

Object d. Here may be that of the Evangelist, *Mark* 13. 32. *Of that Day and Hour knoweth no man, no not the Angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.*

C 3

Ans.

Answ. To which I Answer; This Text hath puzzled many, Ancient and Modern; For resolution know,
 1. That Christ did not know that day as he was a Creature; neither was it fit for a Creature to know. Though to Christ is granted a Transcendent Knowledge: He had a *Created* Knowledge, answering his sinless Capacity, in his Humane Nature: *Concreated*, by a Participation of the Divine Vision; *Infused*, necessarily following the Hypostatical Union. Yea, the Schoolman hath observed, that Christ had an *acquired and experimental* Knowledge, daily gotten by the operation of the active intellect, making species actually intelligible, abstracting them from the Phantasms; Yet as man, he knew not that day. There are two things to be considered in Christ; *viz.* His *Person*; and so he is Omniscient: his *Humane Nature*, and so he was subject to a *Negative* ignorance of such things, whereof the Humane Nature was not capable. *Totus Christus*, was Omniscient; but not *Totum Christi*; he knew as he was God; he did not know as he was man. Neither is it any dishonour to Christ,

Christ, to have such an ignorance imputed to him, since it doth peculiarly belong to his Humane Nature. But,

2. We may resolve the Text thus ; that it did not appertain to his Office to teach them of that time ; So *Nosce* is put for *Docere* ; 1 Cor. 2. 2. *I Determined to know nothing among you but Christ Jesus and him Crucified.* i. e. to Preach any other thing, but Christ; his Name and Grace, his Spirit and Love shall Triumph in my Discourses to you. For without doubt, then Christ knew that day.

Now to add more force to our Pen, we will here propound some Enquiries, the resolution of which, will yeild great illustration to this Doctrine.

Q. How did Christ know ?

Ans. Not by discourse, as men and Angels do. We know one thing after another, and one thing by another. But the Infinite Understanding of Christ, grasps all things, *Simel et Semel*, at an Instant, without any Dilatory View or long Debate ; by seeing the Determination of his own Will ; all being present before him,

who is present every where. And that for divers Reasons :

1. Because he had the *Idea* of all, and the Reason and Ground of all present before him. Though the Knowledge here spoken of, is not so much direct, Intending on the things themselves ; as *Reflex*, by an Act of Intuition on himself, the most clear glass he seeth all things in.

2. Because his Eye was carried from all Eternity, upon and over all ; and that by Vertue of the Eternity and Immenstity of his being. God is in all things, and therefore knows all things. He is a Sphere of Infinite Greatness and Efficacy, and whatever is besides this Sphere, must necessarily be within it, Encircled and Folded up in it. And hence *David* proves Gods *Omniscience* by his *Omnipresence*, *Psal.* 134. 2.

3. The Effect doth ever virtually pre-exist in the Efficient cause ; either *Formally*, as in Univocal Causes, or by way of Eminence, as here. All things known by God, are God, in a more Noble Manner than in themselves.

Q. 2. How can God know things that are not ; for *non entis, null est Scientia* ?

Ans.

Ans. Of no being simply, neither in Act nor Power, the Rule is true; but those *τὰ μὴ ὄντα*, not Beings, were then in *esse Cognito*, and should certainly be in *esse Formali*; He first seeth them in his own Essence, and then blows them into being, by the Breath of his Mouth, by his commanding word.

Quest. 3. *Whether this do not make something for Equivocation?*

Ans. Not at all. For, 1. To call things that are not, as though they were, is a Divine Priviledge, men may not do so. 2. It is an *Essential* Representation, not a *Mental* Reservation. One thing is not conceived and another called; but things that *are not*, are called, as if they were, which shall be in time, as they were known and called before time.

Objected than it may be, *That the Lord foresaw Sin, as if it had been in Act.*

Ans. Undoubtedly he did; purposing to produce and sustain the Act, and permit the obliquity. Which cannot reflect on God, as if he were the Author of Sin, in not preventing it; For though Sin be the worst thing in
the

the World, yet the existence of Sin is not Evil, for then God would not Permit it to be. *Prosper* and *Hilary* both, with Renowned *Austin*, say, The Cause hereof may be unknown to us, but unjust it cannot it be as God. Which Doctrine offers to us,

1. Matter of *Information*, in the following particulars.

First, of the *Independency* of the Creator, in producing and disposing of the Creature. Nothing out of God did move him to do any thing to them. True it is, that he knew them in himself, in their Causes, and in themselves; not by Species resulting from them, but by Reflection on his own Nature. *Extra se non querit Lumen ut videat, ipse enim est qui videt & unde videt.* He needs not Light from without himself to see by, for he it is that seeth, and from himself it is that he seeth; as *Bernard* expresseth it. *Jer. 5. Before I Formed thee in the Womb, I knew thee. 2 Tim. 2. 19. The Lord knoweth who are his; τα μη όντα, No Love, no Election, no foreseen Faith or Work: for then they should have been foreseen in God and not in Man.*

Secondly, of the *Necessity* of the Creature,

Creature, both in respect of Existence and Operation. He calleth those things which are not, as though they were, because of the Necessity and Certainty of their being. Understand this with Reference to the first cause. For if we look to second causes, there are three sorts, *viz. Necessary*, which cannot but do this and that; as the Fire necessarily burneth, and the Sun shineth. *Free*, to this or that Act; as the reasonable Creature is. *Contingent*; beyond Expectation producing Effects accordingly: but all known to the first Cause, before they were, as if they were. So that there is no Room nor need for any *Scientia Media*.

Thirdly, we are Informed how this Divine Omniscience is a ground of *Faith*: *viz.* On a Three-fold account.

1. As it is known to be *infallible*; his Priviledge that cannot deceive, nor be deceived.

2. As it is known to be *Immutable*, subject to no Alteration or Variation, *Jam. 1. 17.* he is described to be *without variableness or Shadow of Change*: As the Sun, he Shines always with the same Rayes of Brightness
(Eclipses)

(Eclipses only excepted ;) an Attribute that runs through all the rest; his Mercy, Council, Love, are all immutable, his Heart is the same to day and for ever. We may be Changed in our opinions and Estate, but the Divine Nature never Changeth.

3. As it is *Incommunicable*. Every Creature is Finite, and this is Infinite. The Gods of the Gentiles were often herein challenged and found wanting: The first Angels would have had it, but sunk under the weight of that desire; and *Adams* Candle aspiring to be a Sun, hath burnt the dimmer ever since.

All these laid together, will prove a strong Motive to believe.

In the Second Use of this point, is discovered the folly of men, in two things, viz.

First, In endeavouring to prevent Gods Omniscieny, by sinning secretly because secretly, and digging deep to hide their Plots. Hear the Language of the Prophet, *Isa. 24. 15, 16. We to them that digg deep, to hide their Counsels from the Lord. They think no eye seeth them, not his, who can do nothing but see: How vain!*

The

The Eyes of God are like two Flaming Torches, more resplendent than the Sun it self; none can steal from his Lightning Flashes. Screech-Owls may find Holes and Nights to keep them from the day, which they cannot abide, but he that flies from the Face of God, where can he find darkness enough to hide himself? Oblind and insensible Fugative from the Sovereign Essence, in the Region of Nothing, whither wilt thou go, not to find the reproaches of thy Crimes! Be Confident, he that can save from the deadliest extremities, can also see in the darkest obscurities.

Secondly, In endeavouring to usurp it; and that,

1. By manifest falshood not only of the Pope and his adherents, defining and concluding things that are not as though they were; but others also, who daringly call their Sins, Gods Temptations; *The Woman then gavest me*, &c. And many have laid the Bastards of Heresie to the door of the Sanctuary, and called Diabolical Seductions, Evangelical Revelations; as if the Father of Lights could bring forth the Issues of Death. This

is to usurp the Royal Prerogative of Heaven, and to invade the Lords Incommunicable Property.

2. By Flattery ; and that either of our selves or others. Of our *selves* ; calling Carnal Contents , Pleasure , Dissolute Passions, true Mirth ; *Covetousness* , Providence ; *Vain-Glory*, Curiosity ; *Presumption*, Hope ; *Fading Creatures*, true Riches ; against our Knowledge. *Solomon* calls them *μηὸντα*, things that are not, in comparison of true Riches, Contentment and Duration ; for they make to themselves *Wings and flie away as the Eagle towards Heaven*. Of others ; especially the Great and the Rich ; for sooner will an *hot May* want flies, than such want Flatterers, calling them to be what they are not. Such was that Parasite who endeavoured to puff up King *Canutus*, by telling him that all his Dominions, nay the Seas themselves, were at his Command. And *Onuphirus* the Popes Biographer, praised *Hildebrand*, or *Gregory* the Seventh, for notable Acts and great Vertues, whom Cardinal *Pembo* truly described to have been a Murtherer, an Adulterer, a Conjuror, every way

way as bad as might be. *Mark Anthony* was a Prince extreamly dissolute, yet was by his Flatterers called, God *Bacchus*, and he soon came to that shameful impudence, as to have that title engraved on his Statute. Such servile Souls there are, who bind themselves like Fishers Angling Lines, seeing their advantages to depend on impertinent Discourse, and that the false Altars of Worldly Greatness will be served with such Smoke, spare it no more than a man would water in a River. No Age, but has been pestered with such Cattle. *Nero's* Courtiers would sooth him up for his singing, though it were exceeding ill, with a *Quam pulcher Caesar Apollo Augustus* ! Like the Flatterer in the Fable, who accomodating himself to the time, gave the Ape many specious praises, saying, He was a Vermilian Rose, and that those that environ'd him, his Young Ones, were the Leaves; that he was the Sun, and those about him were the Raies ; that he was as Valiant as a Lyon, all his off-spring were a Race of Young Lyons. With a multitude among our selves, who call the niggard, *Enurtiful* ; the Voluptuous,

luptuous, *Chaste*; the Proud, *Humble*; the Civil Man, *Religious*; above their Knowledge; they are not so we see it, neither can we make them so, and therefore should not call them so.

Use 3. In the *third* place, this Doctrine yeilds singular comfort to all the Faithful. Your Saviour,

1. Knows all your enemies to prevent them. *He that sits in Heaven, Laughs them to scorn, the Lord will have them in Derision*; be they never so cunning and politick; the Divine Providence shut up in a Cloud; Roareth over their heads, and in a moment will overthrow the Mountains of Wind, which the Tyrants of the World raise one upon the other, and make their silly wisdom appear like an Owl, unfeathered and alham'd at the Raies of Noon-day; though their altitudes may be so many Ravishments to dark the Earth. As it was once said of *Anthony* concerning *Augustus*, so it may be of Christ and the Enemies of his people, His *Geinus* goes beyond theirs.

2. He knows all our wants to supply them; inward, outward, of Soul, Body, for Present, for Future.
Cheer

Cheer up your drooping Spirits, in the Consideration of your Saviour. *In him dwelleth all fulness*, as he is Mediatour; established and destinated for your Salvation; so that all Perfection, Riches, Grace and Excellencies meet there together, Divinity and Humanity fill'd with all the Qualities and Properties that pertain to them, there concur; which Christ hath not for himself, but for his People; as the Sea hath Water, to Convey unto the Earth, and the great Luminary hath Brightness to Enlighten the Heavens and the Earth, that from it, as from a Common source, might Stream forth into all things all the Flame and Warmth they want.

3. Christ knows all your Sins, to Pardon and Subdue them. He calleth you now, what you are not; *Cant.*

4. 7. *Thou art all fair my Love, and there is no Spot in thee.* You shall be, because he will make you so. Your Light shall be without any Shadow, your Beauty without the least Spot to disgrace it. Those Roses that are now in their Blossom, shall be fully blown, and those Stars which are

D

now

now Imprisoned in a Cloud, shall be set in a Clear Skie. The Bright Diamond of your Souls, now soiled with Corruption, shall be cleansed; all the Black Spots now fixt there, shall be changed into radiant Lights of Heaven. *Comfort one another with these words!*

Use 4. Lastly, We are hence instructed in some few Duties, viz. 1. To shun inward Sins; Hypocrisie, Pride, Vain-Glory, Infidelity, as carefully as outward and more visible Sins. God is Omniscient, and views the sins of the heart, as well as the sins of the Life; the under Roots as well as the upper Boughs. He sees Faults where men see none. Nay, that which shines to mans eye like a Diamond, is in Gods Ballance a Contemptible Worm. It was a wise practice, therefore, of that *Arabian* we read of, who to prevent sin, represented to himself over his head, an Eye which perpetually enlightened him, an Ear which heard him, and an Hand which measured out all his Deportments and Demeanours. Verily, the due consideration of Gods Eye, will blunt a thousand and a thousand

thousand Arrows shot against the heart of a resolute Christian. If the exercise thereof, were as familiar to us, as it is effectual; how powerful a motive would it be, to cleanse all the impurities of our Intentions and affections, and give us leave to arrive to the top of Perfection!

2. To seek to him for Knowledg. *Ignorance* is no Branch of his Image who is Omniscient. Let it be the Mother of Popish Devotion, suffer it not so much to be with the Profession of Christs Religion. He giveth wisdom *liberally*. He descended into the Country of Darknes, to scatter Knowledg by his brightness, and ceaseth not to give light, and kindle in our hearts many Inspirations, which are like so many Stars, to conduct us to the Fountain of our Happiness. Hear him promising, *All thy Children shall be taught of God.* It is his Prerogative to teach Hearts. The Sun enlightens the World, and Christ enlightens Souls. Make it your Prayer, Lord, breathe upon us; breathe thy Spirit into thy Word! You may read the Bible and hear Sermons over and over, but to no purpose

pose, till the Spirit of Christ Shine in your Hearts; and the more Commerce you have with the Divine Essence, the more splendour you shall enjoy. And having obtained, use all to his Glory from whom you receive all. Be faithful Stewards. Like as small Rivers, which pay their Tribute and acknowledgments to the great Ocean whence they came.

3. Prize the Lord Jesus Christ; set an high esteem upon him : why do we Reverence Learned men among our selves, as those eminent Doctors, *Reynolds*, both former and latter; *Perkins*, *Bolton*, *Luther*, *Melancthon*, *Musculus*, *Beza*, *Calvin*, *Zanchis*, *Chamier*, *Camero* and others? Among our Adversaries, *Lumbard*, *Aquinas*, *Durand*, *Hales*, &c. Among the Gentiles, *Aristotle*, *Plutarch*, *Homer*, &c. With other brave Fellows, separated from us, by many Lands and Seas, yea, by Death; and all for their Knowledg; because we have seen a Ray of their wits upon Paper, Beams of their Knowledg, which was but a drop of his Ocean, and a Spark of his Light, who Enlightneth every one that cometh into the World; this made

made them admired. If *Alexander* could say, That he was more Bound to *Aristotle* his Schoolmaster, than to his Natural Parent; how much more are we Bound unto and should we Prize and Praise our *Omniscient Jesus*?

Secondly, we have here offer'd to our Consideration, *The Omnipotency of our God, in whom we Believe.*

He calleth; *i. e.* he Causeth things not only to appear, but also to be in time, as they were willed and seen before time;

This Power is either *Absolute*; whereof sacred writings say but little, and about which, we are not to enquire; or *Actual*, as Limited by his Will, and Ordered by his Wisdom, to give being, and dispose his Creatures by means, to their several ends. Of which we are now to discourse; giving us two Observations; *viz.*

1. *That our God, in whom Abraham believed, and we should believe, is Omnipotent.*

2. *That the Omnipotency of our God, in whom we should believe, is a firm ground of Faith.*

For the former ; *Our God is Omnipotent*. He can do all things that imply not Imperfection ; as to Sin, and deny himself : to Sin, is against his *Supremacy* ; he hath no Superiour against whom he might offend ; It is against his Natural Sanctity and Omnipotency. Or, that imply not a Contradiction ; as to be and not to be at the same time, in the same Respect, because that is Repugnant to Entity

This is true of all the Persons ; 1. Of the *Father* ; none ever Acknowledging a God, denying it. So we have it in the Apostles Creed, *I believe in God, the Father Almighty*. Where, *Almighty*, is applyed to the Father, *Inclusively* ; as, Lord, or Dominion is appropriated to the Son, not excluding the Father or the Holy Spirit. Hence it is, that *Hereticks* have appropriated all the Attributes of Eternity, Omniscieny, Omnipotency, to the Father alone.

2. It is true of the *Son*. John 1. 3. *All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made*. Which latter Clause, is added for the more Certainty ; it being usual with the Hebrews,

Hebrews , thus by Negation to Confirm, what before they have affirmed, where they would assure that the thing is so indeed. He is therefore stiled, *The first and the last*, Revel.

1. 17. It is a verity that is written with the Rays of a vast number of Divine Witnesses.

3. It is true of the Holy Spirit. *Gen.*

1. 2. *The Spirit moved on the Face of the Waters ; i. e.* he sustained them by the Power of his Sublimity. However Interpreters have varied hereabout, yet all conclude it to be the Spirit of God, nothing distinct from the Deity, or Infinite Active Power of God. So the Psalmist, 95 *Psalm*, which our Apostle takes notice of , as spoken not *by*, but *of* the Holy Spirit ; *Hebr.* 3. 7.

The Grounds whereof are twofold,

1. The Unity of Nature doth imply, equality of Power ; we say, we believe there are three Subsistences in the Divine Essence, and that each of those Persons, is truly and properly God : and we find such Attributes and works ascribed to the whole Nature of the Deity , to the several

ral Persons Subsisting in that Divine Nature, as do evince their Power to be the same.

2. This Manifestation of power, is *opus ad extra*, and therefore common: According to that constant Rule of Credit among all Divines, *Opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*: But especially Attributed to the Second Person here and in most places; because that is most beneficial to the Church, and is most opposed by Enemies. *Gen. 17. 1. I am God Almighty, [Elshaddai,]* signifying, either *Sufficiency*, because he is sufficient of himself, as *Psalms 16. 2. My Goodness extendeth not to thee, &c.* He is Infinitely above Creatures; Infinite in Essence and Goodness, comprehending within himself all good, and anticipating it to all Eternity with an incomparable Eminency. Or else, it signifieth, *Omnipotency* (for the word will bear both) all things yielding to him, both for their being, order and continuance. *Gen. 18. 14. Is there any thing too hard for the Lord?* *Numb. 23. 19. God is not as men that he should lie, neither the Son of Man, that he should Repent;*
hath

hath he said, and shall he not do it ? Mat. 19. 26. With God all things are possible.

But what need of proof ? It is a truth written as with Rayes of the Sun ; confirm'd at least 70 times in the Scriptures of God, as some have taken pains to reckon them. Add we may,

1. The Confession and practice of the Saints of God in all Ages; *2 Chron. 20. 12. O our God wilt thou not judge them ? 2 Chron. 25. 9. God hath power to help and to cast down. Flying from their Enemies both inward and outward, to rest upon his Rock of Power. Rom. 7. 25. I thank God through Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 15. 57. O Death where is thy Sting ! Thanks be to God through Christ.*

2. The works of Christ ; Curing the Diseased ; *Mark 5. 26, 27. Cleansing the Temple, Math. 21. 12, 13. Which Jerom Attributes to his Omnipotency ; that he so mean, should attempt a matter so considerable, against so many proud, insolent persons, arm'd with Authority, and at such a time ; and extolls it above raising of Lazarus from the Dead, Restoring*

storing the Blind to sight, and the Lame to their Limbs. This was his Divine Work. Not to omit the mentioning of his Changing Water into Wine ; *John* 27.

Thus as the greatness of the Sun is measured by a small Shadow on the Earth, so many times there needs but few words to illustrate a great Vertue.

The Reasons are many, I shall chuse out and insist upon two only :

1. The Unitie of Nature common to all the Persons, *John* 17. 22. *As we are one. Unum per Unitatem* ; i.e. by the absolute simplicitie of Nature. *Phil.* 2. 6. *Who---Reckoned himselfe equal with God*, in that incomprehensible abundance of Perfection, whereof the supream Adorable Nature is full ; as Life, Goodness, Immenstity, Eternity, Holiness, and all other Properties, which it hath in an infallible manner. Now from the purity and Perfection of that Infinite Being, we may thus argue for *Omnipotency*, viz.

That which hath Being and is most distant from Passive Power, being Ens Simplissimum, & Actus purissimus, a most

most Simple Being, and a most pure Act, must partake Infinitely of Active Power ; which is Omnipotency,

Again ; In whom is found the Perfection of all things, in him is also found the Perfection of Power : But in Christ is found the Perfection of all things, Eminently, as is already proved, therefore in him, is the Perfection of Power ; which is Omnipotency, to which nothing can be added.

2. The Equality of Attributes ; as is his Knowledge : so is his Will and Power, *Psal. 135. 6. Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in Heaven and Earth.* Now Knowledge and Power, are according to the Condition of Nature ; Men know and can do something ; *Angels* know and can do more ; but God most of all, his Knowledge is Infinite, and so must his Power needs be.

The Second Doctrine from hence, now comes to hand, *viz. That this is a Principal Ground of Faith.*

See *Heb. 11. 6. Without Faith it is Impossible to please God ; for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

Gen.

Gen. 17. When God would encourage *Abraham*, he maketh himself known by the glorious Attribute of his Almighty Power ; *I am God Almighty.* *Math. 8. 2.* *Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me Clean.* There is no such proper Pillar to uphold a falling Spirit, as this of the power of God ; No Shade like to this, to ward off the strokes of Evil. One Shine of this Attribute in its full Lustre of Glory, is able to dispell in a moment, all the nights of Fear, Doubts, Temptations, which may at any time overspread the Heaven of the Soul, it causeth them utterly to vanish. Here's the Adamantine Bulwark against all Adversary Power. *The Devil is Mighty, but not Almighty, as my God and Saviour is ;* was that comforted *Luther*, that Incarnate Seraphin, and Champion of Christ.

How it is so, will further appear, if we consider,

1. The *Difficulty* of things offer'd, both for matter and manner. As that all things should be ours again, after they were lost ; that the Divine and Humane Nature should be united ;

united; that a Virgin should Conceive and Bear a Son; what great and admirable things are these? Here are matters which the clearest Understandings of Men and Angels entertain with Amazement, things in a Sphere above Nature, beyond all Humane Disquisition; *The deep things of God*; the Divine Omnipotency can only maintain Faith in the sense of their possibility.

2. His *Propriety* in and over all. He made all, gave them a Being according to the *Idea* and Platform presented to the Divine Understanding; and he hath absolute Right to dispose of all, *Rom. 9. 18. To do with his own as he will.* His Power is independent, and Prerogative unlimited, *Psal. 8. 6.* to be understood of *Christ*; *Thou madest him to have Dominion over the works of thine Hands.* Which *Absolute Power* floweth not from the nature of *Communicative Bounty*, in bestowing Gifts, to some more, to others less, and so hath more or less Right over them; for then his Power should be finite and limited, as (*Arminians* hold, only to cut off the Absolute Decree,

Decree, which the Lord pass by virtue of his Right) no Creature being capable of an Infinite measure of goodness: But from the *Excellency of his Nature*, being Omniscient, Omnipotent, Infinite, Eternal, &c.

3. From the *Irresistability* of his power: All things do obey him. There is nothing from Heaven to Hell which boweth not under his Laws. *Rom. 9. 19. Who hath resisted his Will? Luke 7. 7, 8. Say the words, and thy Servant shall be Healed.* And this is true of Christ, as appears *Math 8. 27. Even the Winds and the Seas obey him.* Xerxes the Persian Monarch, threw Fetters into the Sea, as if he would have Chained the unruly Waves; but to little purpose; but when Christ speaks, *The Winds and the Seas shall obey him.* By a word he unpins the Wheels and breaks the Axle-Tree of the whole Creation. In short, whatever the Divine Understanding can Comprehend, so much the Divine Power can Execute.

4. From the *Incommunicableness* of this Attribute. No Creature is Capable of being Omnipotent: & *quicquid recipitur, ad modum Recipientis, Recipitur.*

Recapitur. Besides every Creature is Resistable in the Exercise of Natural Qualities. *In him we Live and move and have our Being :* he Supports, Restrains, and orders all.

But here we meet with Objections from some, who, Imitating the Sorcerers, cast mists upon the Brightest Morning.

1 Object. *May not this Omnipotency be Imputed to the Humane Nature of Christ ?*

Ans. By Reason of the Union Hypostatical, the Properties of both Natures may be Communicated to the Person, and yet not mutually between the Natures. The Natures were not Changed, nor their Properties Confounded, each Retaining after, what was peculiar before. Christ suffered and Dyed, but according to his Humanity; Christ was Omniscient and Omnipotent, but according to his Deity.

2 Object. *Is raised from that Passage of Christ himself, Math. 28. 18. All Power is given me in Heaven and in Earth ;* which say some, cannot be understood of his Deity, for so he was not Capable of any Addition.

Ans. It is spoken of Christ as Mediator.

Mediator. Omnipotency was given to him for Intercession, and Application of his Merits, for the Governing and gathering of his Saints ; *That all things shall work together for good : so, John 5. 22. The Father judgeth no man, but hath Committed all Judgment to the Son;* and for other Places of that Nature, they are to be understood, not Simply of Power, but of *Authority* ; according to that, *1 Cor. 15. 24, 25. Then the End shall come, when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God even the Father, when he shall have put down all Rule and all Authority and Power ; for he must Reign till he hath Subdued all his Enemies under his Feet. Which* establisheth the former answer.

3. Object. *Is it not Communicated to Believers ?*

Answ. Christ hath given very great Power to Believers, in so much as 1. Believers *can do all things* ; but then see whence their bow hath such a back of Steel, *viz.* in and from Christ, by a derived Power. Christ leaves on such as have received him, some footsteps and Impressions of his *Omnipotency* : for, whereas *Divine Power* Consisteth especially in two things *viz.*

In Gods being able to do all things that are Regularly possible, and his not being able to do any thing Sinful ; so, we find some Prints of both upon Christians ; *I can do all things*, saith Saint Paul ; *And whosoever is born of God cannot Sin*, saith Saint John : this I say, is by a derived Power, Communicated to them according to their Capacity.

2. All things are possible to them ; *i. e.* all things as Christ was to do for them, or they receive from him as Mediator ; *all things are possible to them*, not *Simply*, but *Respectively* to that Power, unto which all things are Referr'd and Subjected.

Well then ; to apply the whole.

Use 1. First, Diverse Corolaries may be deduced from the whole, by way of *Information*, viz.

1. That he in whom we believe, Jesus Christ, God blessed for ever, was before all things that now have being, and gave being to all. *John 8. 58. Before Abraham was, I am.* *John 1. 2. The same was in the Beginning ;* in the Instant of Creation, therefore also, before the Creation, and therefore from Eternity. Indeed *Arrius*

E

Corrupts

Corrupts the Greek Text, reading it thus, *The Lord Created me in the Beginning* ; and thence Blasphemously Inferred, that Christ was no more than a Creature. But the Scripture saith, *He was set up from Everlasting* ; Prov. 8. 23. and he is called, *The Ancient of Days*, Dan. 7. 9. And as he was before all things, so he gave being to all things ; 1 John 3. He was not Idle with the Father (as some Blasphemously speak) but by him as a Principal Efficient, co-Agent, the Father and Holy Ghost , all things were made.

2. That all things (Creatures) which we see and know, once were not, and are in the Power of God to be Reduced into nothing ; or to be Disposed by him , as he shall please, according to his Absolute Sovereignty. God hath Power over every Created being, and over every part of being ; He being *Jehovah*, that gave being to all and received being from none. He Confirms Scepters and Crowns ; he Raiseth Cities, Provinces and Monarchies ; he erects States, preserves Laws, and Travels through-out all Nature without take-

ing.

ing pains ; and can as easily Reduce them all to nothing.

3. That there is an exact Conformity between the Decree and the Execution. Things that had no being, were called as if they had been, and in time they were, as they were before called. There is no depending Freedom in any Creature : God sustains the Agent, and determines the Action ; his Power reacheth over all.

4. That God cannot Sin, for he is Omniscient and cannot err ; he is Omnipotent and hath no passive Power to receive from without, that might change his will. Ever is to be abhorred the Blasphemous Doctrine of the *Marcionites*, *Manichees*, and *Libertines*, who would make this Dreadful and Sacred Majesty the Cause of most detestable Errours ; yet with as much absurdity as they, who make the Sun Guilty of Darkness, by whom the Heaven is enlightned ; and the Sea of Driness, by whom the whole Earth is Moistned. And therefore Conclude against *Bellarmin*, who Wickedly Imputed to Protestant Divines, that which they Detest with greatest Loathing.

E 2

5. That

5. That we have the same ground for our Faith as *Abraham* had, viz. the *Omnipotency* of *Christ*, seen in the Creation of the World, and Sustainment of all, in bearing with all; in the great Empire and Defence of the Church and Gospel, in the midst of Enemies; in Converting, Pardoning Sin, and Preserving all his House from Apostacy; In all which you have a Marvellous Discovery of his Divine Power, who maketh Light to break out of Darkness, and Traces the Rays of his Glory upon an heap of Dirt, using base and Inferiour Persons and things, for the good of his People.

6. Therefore we should not Finally doubt nor despair of our selves or others, *Math. 19. 26. With God all things are possible. Rom. 11. 32. God is able to Graft them in again. Saint Augustine* in his third Epistle to *Volusian*, and else-where, give Rules against distrustful Reasonings; *Tota ratio facti, Potentia Facientis; Consecra Authorem, tolle Dubitationem.* We must grant God to be able to do some things, the Reason of which we are not able to Comprehend; the whole Reason of doing, being the Power

Power of the Doer : it is God that doth them ; Consider the Author, and all doubts will cease. Let us Remember *Paul*, *Mary Magdalen*, *Manasses*, and other Monuments of Gods Power, which hath Crowned Plants with Flowers and Fruits, that were Barren and Accursed ; fill'd Desarts and the most Desolate Heaths, with Exquisite and Delicate Trees ; which Examples had never come to our Hearing , had it not been for our Encouragement. With these should every Sound Penitent be Revived and Comforted. God can turn Noisom Dung-hills into a Mine of Gold, Brands of Hell into Lightsome Stars, in the highest Firmament ; Slaves of *Demons* into Angels.

Doubt not , Despair not of the Church and State. *Ezek. 37. 11, 12. O my People , I will open your Graves, and cause you to come out of your Graves.* What cannot God do, who can Create ? Nothing can stand before a Creating Power. He needeth no existing Matter to work upon, nor Instruments to Work with. O , what a great thing is nothing in the Hand of God !

Use 2. Secondly, this Doctrine sounds sharp reproof against those, 1. Who abuse this Attribute either in opinion or practise. In,

Opinion, as they who argue a *Posse ad esse*, because of the power of God; and Attribute that to it, which implies a Contradiction; as to be a Finite Body in Substance, and yet Infinite in Presence, to be every where. It is Christs Divine Property to be at many places at once, neither inclusively nor exclusively. If it be said, That the Omnipotency of God may extend the Dimensions of Christs Body, that it may at the same time fill Heaven and Earth; it may be easily replied, This is to make Christ a Monster, and to contradict the very Nature of a Created Body. Yet Papists most confidently obtrude this Principle upon the Word, and by this their Catholick Power, make a Body to be at two places at once; as the Body of Christ in Heaven, and upon a popish Altar at once: Which is a contradiction, and therefore a lye. *Let God be true and every man a Lye.* Heaven is said to receive Christs Body, *Acts 3. 21.* In

Practise;

Practice ; As they, *First*, who live as if they were Omnipotent. Such there be in the World, who endeavour to make their Will a Law, and cause all to fall down before them. Like *Jezebel* and *Sennacharib*; confounding Elements, and raising Stars with the Dust of the Earth, whereby to come to the end of their exorbitant pretensions; Threatning to hew down Mountains, and Thunder-strike Mortals; supposing all the ample house of Nature to be Created for them. Swallowing the World by Avarice, and wasting it by Riot. And not only so, but according to the improvement of their Cruel Pride, cry not, with the Old Tyrant, for another World to plunder, but attempt the Invasion of the Intelligible World, and commit Rapine upon Souls, making havock of the Church of God, to which Angels refer but as Ministering Spirits; and Lording it over Gods Heritage, which the Apostles besought to be *Reconciled to God*, and never Commanded them any thing, in their own name, and only such things, for which, they could shew unquestionable Commission. Such as

these set themselves down in the Throne of God, as *Maximilian* that good Emperour used to say; this being one of those three things, the Divine Power hath reserved to himself as his Prerogative, *viz.* To Create, to Foretel things to come, and to Rule over Consciences. *Secondly*, Living as if they cared not for him that is Omnipotent, indeed despising his Threatnings, slighting his Promises, as if he were able to perform neither. Whence they dare to lift an Arm against the Omnipotent! When as all power in Heaven and in Earth, yea, all Judgment is committed to Christ. He hath Authority to relieve his Saints, to Sentence all his Enemies unto Eternal Flames and Torments; and will make some as bright as Stars, and others like Burning Coals in Hell. O Hear, Consider, Tremble!

2. This Doctrine casteth a sharp Dart of reproof against all such that deny or doubt of it: as those *Israelites* who said, *Can the Lord provide Flesh also?* And that Court-Favourite, *2 Kings 7. 2.* Who, when the Prophet *Elisha*, by the Command of God,

God, foretold the great Plenty of *Samaria*, dared to say, *If the Lord open the Windows of Heaven, can these things be?* Such unbelieving hearts are among us to this day. Can the Lord do this or that? Is he able to accomplish what he hath promised, can he Heal my Backslidings, pardon my Sins, and save my Soul? As if the Lord *Jehovah*, lived after the rate of Creatures. This is to reproach the Holy One of *Israel*.

3. Against such as rely altogether on the Power of God, without the use of Means. As the former fort *Reproach* God, so these *Tempt* God. The Lord could indeed Enlighten us without the Sun, and afford us Fruit without the Earth; but he will have the Creature Operate. The very Heathen could say, *Admota manu, Invocanda est Minerva*; and the Sage Greek, Rebuked the foolish Carter, who, when his Waggon stuck in the Mud, Cryed to God, but never put his hand to help himself: Meanes must be used. Though men live not by Bread alone, but by the word of Gods Blessing proceeding out of his Mouth, yet that word is Annexed to *Bread*,
and

and not to Stones : and that man should not *Trust* but *Tempt* God, who would have Stones turned into Bread, because God hath Power so to do. And if God have provided stairs it is not *Faith* but *Fury*, not *Confidence* but *Madness* to go down a Precipice. Second Means must be used in Obedience to Gods order, though not in Confidence of their help; the Creature must be the Object of our *Dilligence*, but God only the Object of our *Trust*.

Use 3. Thirdly, This Doctrine, as it is sufficient to terrify the Wicked, so it is to give occasion of Confidence to the *Faithful*; since it hath an Eternal alliance with him that governs the World. Read your matchless Consolation, in the following particulars.

1. Against Sin, Satan and all Enemies of the Church, that Christ is Omnipotent, 2 *Chron.* 20. 15. In the Words of King *Jehosaphat* to the People of *Judah*, *Thus saith the Lord to you, Be not afraid or dismayed because of this great Multitude, for the Battel is not yours but Gods.* 2 *Chron.* 32. 7, 8. *Hezekiah* said to the People, *Be strong and Courageous, be not Afraid or Dismayed, for the Kings of Assyria, nor for the*

the Multitude that is with them, for they are more with us than with them. Whatever Power or Counsel shall be set up against Heaven, shall not succeed against the design of Heaven. The vast Numbers of men, trouble him no more, than those Millions of Waves in the Sea, are a trouble to that great Ocean. All Nations before him, are but as one drop of the Dew. He causeth whole Countries to tremble under the Force of his Word, as under Lightning Arrows; and is attired with the Conquest and Trophies of Souls. O the Wonders of God! He causeth the Arrows of those that Invade his Kingdom, to Return against them that shot them; as in *Julian's* Case was apparent; which we only mention. Though he thought by the help of his false Gods, to Command the Waves of the Sea, and to walk upon the Stars, yet was he buried in Execration and Horrors.

And as it is in Temporals, so it is in Spirituall. He can subdue the strongest Corruptions, Break the hardest Heart, relieve the most Fainting Graces. Let all Christs People learn to look up, and then you will,

1. Patiently

1. Patiently suffer and wait. He is Omniscient and Omnipotent ; He knows all and can relieve all.

2. You will learn to rest upon him, *Psalms 37. 3. Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the Land.* You will not trust in men and frame to your selves an arm of Straw ; but confide in him, who with the Fingers of his Power sustains the whole Globe of the Earth. You will not Adore the Favours of men, which are like the Rainbow in Heaven, which having made shew of many Splendours and varied Paintings, leaves nothing but Water and Morter. You will then no more build Fortunes on Foundations of Silver, upon a Frail man, who beareth all the Fingers of Vanity. God is a Wall of Brasse about his people. *Lo I am with you to the end of the World !* In all Conditions. If *Daniel* be in the Lyons Den, he shall be visited by God, and the Lyons change their Nature, for regard to him. If the three worthiest be cast into the Fiery Furnace, *Nebuchadnezzars* Hell, they shall walk entire, assisted by the Angel of God, as in a Meadow Enameld over with Flowers ;

Flowers : And now, when, one would have thought, that whole Religion had been dead, the Divine Power Writes her Praises in Characters of Fire. Whoever forsakes the Lords People, he will not forsake them. He is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.

2. This Doctrine speaks singular Comfort against losses, of Country, Friends, Estate, Liberty, and all outward Comforts ; if you be in Covenant with him that is Omnipotent. This was *Abrahams* Case, *Gen. 17* 1. *Fear not Abraham, I am thy Shield ; I am God Almighty, or All-sufficient ;* before whom nothing can stand when he will accomplish his Word. This was a bottom of great Confidence to *Abraham*, as we are informed, *Rom. 4. 29. Being fully persuaded, &c.* Where ever God is engaged by his Word, his Power is especially to be eyed. Persons are apt to ask, How can these things be ? It is impossible it should be so and so to us ; but he is able, Omnipotent. It is he that made *Josephs* Abasements to be his Advancements ; and that turn'd *Balaams* Curse into a Blessing. He can bring

bring Meat out of the Eater, and Sweet out of the Strong, and cause Grapes to be gathered of Thorns, and Figs from Thistles, make Friends of Enemies, your Wound your Cure, your Affliction, your Consolation. Nay, your Weakness, your Strength. So that as the same Water is sowre in the juice of a Figtree, is sweet in the fruit ; so the Troubles which in their bark are but sowre and unpleasing, shall notwithstanding in the fruit of them be exceeding sweet.

Use 4. Lastly, Be ye Instructed to be followers of *Abraham*, in this Winterly Age of the World : to build on this Foundation, in your Obedience both Active and Passive.

1. Be perswaded of this Truth, Measure not God by the Ell of man, Cloath him not in your Fashion. Hold not that Impossible to the Divinity, what your weak Understanding cannot Apprehend. Be perswaded,

First, That he is able to cast down the Strongest and Proudest Enemies of his Kingdom : *Isa. 37. 29. Because thy Rage against me and thy Tumult is come up into mine Ears, therefore will I put mine Hook into thy Nose, and my Bridle*

Bridle in thy Lips, &c. When the Rage and Tumult of Christs Adversaries is highest, then will he get himself most Glory, by putting a Hook in their Nostrils, and turning them as he pleaseth. Can any thing be too hard for God? this God of Power, who Darkneth the Air with Tempests, makes Clouds to pour down in Deluges, and Swallows up the Fleets of petty *Pharo's*? He who flyeth upon wings of the Wind, over the Curling Waters of the Sea, Inflaming Lightnings, and makes Blood and Scorpions to Rain on the Rebels of the Earth?

Secondly, That he is able to Raise out of the lowest Condition. Witness *Job* on the Dunghill, *Israel* in *Egypt*, the Christians of the Primitive Church, and all along, whence they were ready to cry out, *There is no Hope*. His Power and Essence walk Hand in Hand; in so much, as Power in God is nothing else but the Effective Essence of God.

Object. *We all believe Gods Power, but doubt of his Will.*

Ans. All do not believe his Power. The *unregenerate* man believes
not

not at all. All unbelief doth secretly question the Power of God. And *Renewed* men believe not *Fully*. Things past and present, all can believe, because they are seen, but things promised, because they Transcend the Course of natural Causes, and the Contrivances and Projects which they forecast, they often Flag and Falter about them. For,

1. They limit him in their thoughts, they will have such and such Graces, so much in the use of Means, and such Means, those of their own Choice, rather than others; whereas God is an Independent Agent, and works where, when, and as he will. As God is Omnipotent to Command Supplies for any help, so he is Absolute to Chuse what Means he please-eth, and his Wisdom shall pitch upon.

2. They Determine and often Conclude against themselves, and rashly too, and against their present Condition; being brought to some extremity, they drew up desperate Conclusions against Mercy it self, saying, *The Lord will be gracious no more; I shall surely fall by the strength of this Corruption*

Corruption and that Temptation. *Mrs. Honynwoods* Case is famous ; who confidently affirm'd, she should be Damn'd, as sure as that Glass would break, that she threw against the wall. And *David* in his haste said, *I am cut off from before thine Eyes.* If they are advanced, then they shall never be cast down ; *David* also in such a Case could say, *My Mountain shall never be moved:* good News lifts them up, and ill News casts them down. It argueth a great Defect, in the uncertainty of the heart with God, who is both powerful and willing.

2. Make use of this Doctrine and Truth delivered about Christs *Omni-*potency, these three ways, viz.

First, in your Faith to believe his Word. Prophecies shall be accomplished, Promises be fulfilled. Anti-Christ shall fall. *Psalm 2. 7. Thou shalt break them with a Rod of Iron, &c. Ezek. 24. 14. I the Lord have spoken it, it shall come to pass.* Accordingly when the Seven Angels appeared with the seven last Plagues, *they that stood on the Sea of Glass, said in their Song, Great and Marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Almighty, &c.* And when
F the

the third of them poured out his Vi-
ol upon the Rivers of Water, an
Angel of the Altar said, *Even so Lord
God Almighty, &c.* So that all who
wish well to *Sion*, make full account,
that in due time *the Mountain of the
Lord shall be set upon the top of all
Mountains*, because it hath been pro-
mised of old, and be confident, as it
is expressed in *2 Thess. 2. 8. That the
wicked one shall be consumed by the
Breath of his Mouth, &c.* Because
this Commination standeth upon the
file in Holy Scripture, and is not yet
verified. Though God do not allways
fulfill his Threatnings, but on Re-
pentance revoke them; yet he al-
wayes fulfill his Promises to them
that fear him and hope in his Mer-
cy.

Secondly, in your Prayers, to Crave
his Aid and Assistance. *Whatever ye
ask the Father in my name, he will give
it you.* Let men be never so prone,
the Carnal Appetite uniting with a
probable Object, being able of it self
no more to Resist, than a Stone can
from Descending, or the Adamant
from Drawing, yet the Lord can Re-
strain, Renew, do away all old things,
and

and make all to become New. *To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life.* From his eyes alone, are darted Rayes of most Powerful Compassions.

Thirdly, In your Patience under any of his Rods, and Diseases Natural, Spiritual, Political. *Ephes. 3. 20. He is able to do abundantly above all, what we are able to ask or think.* It is a tried Case, *Psal. 3. 6. I will not be afraid of ten Thousands of People that have set themselves against me round about.* O say, Fie upon Despair and minds Affliction! Learn in all things that appertain to you, speedily and Effectually to fix your selves on the Will of the Omnipotent. Continually say, God seeth this Affair, since nothing escapeth the Quickness of his Eye. Expect but a while, the Trouble is but a Flying Cloud, and God will do all for the best. Thus did *Abraham* in the Text; *Above Hope he believed in Hope*, because God quickeneth the Dead, and calleth things that are not, as though they were.

Verf. 18. *Who against Hope,
Believed in Hope.* -----

THESE words Contain a lively Description of *Abrahams* Faith, drawn from the *Internal Form*, it was *παρ' ἐλπίδα ἐπ' ἐλπίδε*, A Phrase Difficult to be understood, but most aptly serves to shew the Difficulty of believing. Some turn the word *παρ'* by *Præter*, besides hope; others, by *Supra*, above Hope; a third sort, by *Absque*, without. All may be true, but not reach so fully Home, neither to the Word nor Scope of the Apostle. Our last Translation therefore, following many, both Antient and Modern Divines, Reads it, *Against*; and so I find some Refering it,

1. To the time of *Abrahams* Faith; in the beginning of his Age he had hope, but this was against that. In the middle of his Age he complain'd, as if there were no hope; *Gen. 15.*
2. *Lord what wilt thou give me, since I go childless?* But this was after that.
2. Others refer it to the kinds of hope,

hope, or degrees of one and the same hope; whom I rather choose to follow.

First, understand it was spoken of two Kinds of Hope; one *natural*, when Reason apprehends Grounds why such a thing may be; and this is proportionably common to men with Beasts. Another *Divine*; when a man waits for that he can see no ground in himself, nor reason for. *Abraham* was against the first, and in the second.

Secondly, Others take it for one and the same hope, but in different degrees, It was weak and doubtful in the beginning, but strong and firm in the end. Faith and Hope (two individual companions; Hope springing from Faith, as the Stream from the Fountain, or the Daughter from the Mother) meet with many oppositions, but prove victorious in the end. Yeilding us three things Right Worthy of Observation, *viz.*

1. *The Connexion of these two Theological Graces, Believing in Hope.*
 Rom. 5. 2. *By whom also we have Access by Faith into this Grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in Hope of the Glory of*
 F 3 God,

God. 1 Pet. 1. 21. By whom we do believe in God that raised him from the Dead and gave him Glory, that your [Faith and Hope] might be in God. The Sun and the Beams go together, and so do Faith and Hope.

The Reasons are, 1. They are infused at once, when the Spirit is given to the Elect, as they are capable of it, before, in, or after Baptism. What they say of the Cardinal Vertues, *Sunt inter se connexæ*, they are chain'd together, may be also said of the Graces of Gods Spirit, who plants an habit of all the Graces in the Heart. The *New Creature* hath all the Parts and Lineaments, a mixture of all the Humours.

2. From the order and maner of Working; one begetteth the other, and manifesteth it self by another. *Rom. 5. 3, 4. And not only so, but we Glory in Tribulations also, knowing that Tribulation worketh Patience; and Patience, Experience; and Experience, Hope; &c. Faith there is a Mother attended with her Daughters. Rom. 15. 13. The God of Hope fill you with all Joy and Peace in believing, that you may abound in Hope. 1 Cor.*

13. 7. *Charity believeth all things, Hopeth all things, &c.* Heb. 12. 1. *Faith is the Substance of things not seen.* Faith lights the Lamp to hope, as the Fire of the Altar lighted the Lamps of the Sanctuary.

2. We are hence to observe, *the Difficulty of believing; it is against Hope.* Math. 19. 13. *a Rich man can hardly Enter into the Kingdom of God.*

This appears divers wayes; viz.

1. From the *Efficient* necessarily required to work Faith in the Heart. *Ephes. 1. 19.* It is called the *exceeding greatness of his Power to us-ward who believe.* A Difficult Work requires a great Power to accomplish it. Man, as *Clem. Alexandrinus* observes, is Gods Harp; the Harp cannot sound unless it be touched with the finger, neither can the Heart of man sound forth any Gracious Harmony, till it be touched by the Finger of Gods Spirit; Sin having disorder'd the Strings of that Harmonious Instrument, put it out of Tune, and mar'd its Musick, and there is nothing but Jarring; and so it continues, till that great Musician, who

F 4

tunes

tunes the whole World and makes all things keep time and measure, set this Instrument in Tune again.

2. From the Paucity of Believers. *Isa 58. 1. Who hath believed our Report? &c. Luke 18. 8. When the Son of man cometh, shall he find Faith on the Earth?* Among the Millions at Rome, there were but few Senators; and among the swarms of People in the World, there are but few Believers. In themselves, indeed Considered, they are many, as the Stars which adorn the Azure Firmament, as the Sands on the Sea shore for Multitude; but Comparatively, they are very few. As in the Field there are more Weeds than sweet Flowers, and in the Earth more Dross than Gold; Thus it is here. The Trees of Righteousness are thinly Planted in the Worlds Orchard. There are but few Birds of Paradise, to the Birds of Prey: Notwithstanding all the Means of Grace, Preaching, Exhorting, Reading, &c. few Believers.

3. From the many Enemies of Faith, and other Impediments; There is *Satan; Luke 22. 31. Satan hath desired to winnow you as Wheat, but I have prayed*

prayed, that thy Faith fail not. This
 is the main thing he aims at, This he
 Assaults, endeavouring to blind-fold
 the Eye of Judgment ; to allure the
 Will and Affections after Toys, Plea-
 sure , Profits and worldly Honours :
 perswading sometime to presume,
 other-while driving to Despair.
 Thus he sifts and Winnows poor
 Souls, to keep them in Unbelief, or
 Misbeleif. There is the *World of*
Unregenerate men , as the *Scribes and*
Pharisees, watching to catch our Sa-
 viour that they might accuse him ;
 Concluding, if any man did Confess
 Christ, he should be put out of the
 Synagogue, *John 9. 22.* Yea, for a
 time, *Paul*, a Chosen Vessel, was u-
 sed as an Instrument that way ; *Acts*
28. 23. *Concerning this Sect, it is spo-*
ken against every where. A great Dis-
 couragement. Yea, our own *Natural*
Abilities , which are Antipodes to
 Grace ; *Rom. 1. 22.* *Professing them-*
selves wise, they became Fools. *1 Cor. 1.*
22. *The Jews Require a Sign, the*
Greeks seek after Wisdom ; not that
 which cometh from above ; by *Wisdom*
 they could not come to the Knowledg
 of God , but proved most Vain and
 Corrupt ;

Corrupt, when they endeavoured to be most Exact.

So that we may Conclude with the Apostle, *Ephes. 6. 10, 11. &c. Finally my Brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might; put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against all the Wiles of the Devil; For we wrestle not with Flesh and Blood, &c.*

2. We observe hence, *The growth, increase, and Final Victory of True Grace.*

Against Hope he believed in Hope. Math. 13. 32. The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a Grain, and to Leaven that leaveneth the whole Lump. Grace is of a spreading nature, it swells it self into the whole man, and makes the Soul rise as high as Heaven. Grace lies not in the Heart, as a Stone in the Earth, but puts it self forth in vigorous Actings. To this refers that exhortation, 2 Pet. 3. 17. Fall not from your Stedfastness, but grow in Grace, &c. The first appearance of it on the Soul, may be but as the Wings of the Morning, spreading themselves upon the Mountains, yet it is still rising higher and higher upon it, Chasing

ling away all filthy Mists and Vapours of Sin, till it arrive to its Meridian height ; such is the strength and force of Divinity in it. Though at first, when it enters on the Soul, it may seem to be sown in weakness, yet it still raiseth it self in Power : As Christ was in his *Bodily* appearance, still increasing in Wisdom and Knowledg, and Favour with God and Man, till he was perfected with Glory ; so is he also in his Gracious Appearance in his Saints, who shall go from strength to strength, till they appear before God in *Sion*.

The Reasons hereof are taken,

1. From the Principle or Fountain whence Grace Floweth ; And that is, Christ and his Spirit ; of Infinite Value and irresistible Efficacy ; so that unless Christ be overcome, Grace cannot be overcome. Grace being a Creature, is in its own nature perishing (for ours is no better Coin than *Adams*) but in Christs Keeping it can never perish. The Saints Graces of themselves, like Glass, may break, but being held in the Hand of Christ, they can never be broken ; 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. *We are kept by*
the

the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation. The small Mustard-Seed shall not be killed, the little Spark of Fire shall not be quenched; there is an overflowing Power to draw them forth and perfect them. Where-ever the frame of Grace is begun, it shall be brought forth to a compleatness, and Christs Kingdom in that Soul shall be victorious over all opposition of Corruption.

2. From the Nature of the Opposers of Grace: They are finite, and mortally Wounded. Our Lord led *Captivity Captive*, Heb. 2. 14. *And through Death hath Destroyed him who hath the Power of Death.* So that upon serious Consideration, I may say to all the Faithful, as *Elisha* sometime spake, 2 Kings 6. 16. *Fear not, for they that are with you are more than they with them.* Though inward Corruption and outward Enemies be Numerous and strong, yet they shall not Finally prosper. Where Christ promotes his Kingdom, it is so established, that the *Gates of Hell* shall not prevail against it. Assaulted it may be, but Conquered it can never be. As it is said of the old *Romans*, they lost

lost some Battels, but never lost a war. Christians may have some Foils, but they shall be finally Victorious.

Use 1. In the Application hereof, I shall endeavour a little further to Discover the Nature of this Grace of Hope, &c.

1. By way of *Information*; the Enquiry will be,

First, *What it is?*

Ans. It is a Divine Vertue, Infused by the Spirit into the Understandings and Wills of Actual Members of the Militant Church, whereby they certainly and patiently wait for those good things God hath promised, *Rom.* 8. 24, 25. *We are saved by Hope; but Hope that is seen is no Hope; for what a man sees, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then we do with Patience wait for it.*

In which Description we have expressed or Implied, four things:

1. The Principal Author, *The Spirit of God*; *1 Pet.* 1. 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his Abundant mercy hath Begotten us again unto a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead.*

2. The

2. The *Subject* inclusive; partly the Understanding, partly the Will; the one Informed, the other perswaded to expect.

3. The *Object* about which it is Employed; either *Formal*; which is God alone; his Power, Truth and Help to obtain the promised Good: or *Material*; and that is *Glory*, considered three wayes, *viz.* *First*, of the *Soul*, which is Grace, and is the Object of Hope, either in the *Preparatives*, whilst the Lord is Disposing the Subject for Grace; Or, in Regard of a *Fuller* Measure of Degrees thereof; it not being with the Trees of Righteousness, as it was with the Trees of Paradise, made perfect at once. *Secondly*, of the *Body*; and so all the good things that a member of the Church Militant is capable of, are a Secondary Object of Hope. *Thirdly*, the *Glory* of both, which is perfect Beatitude in the Heavenly Kingdom; as the end whereunto all other means lead the Elect.

4. The Conditions of this Material Object, which *Aquinas* describes to be,

Good ;

Good ; Hope looks at some good ; so it differs from Fear, which looks at Evil.

Future Good ; so that the Saints in Heaven, have no need nor use of it : their Expectation is drowned in Fruition.

Difficult, Hope looks on, and considers upon one side Pearls, which yet are in the shell ; and on the other side Roses ; which yet it may enjoy with some Labour.

Such was *Abrahams* Hope, that he should be the Father of such a Posterity, being as it were Dead ; that he should enjoy a Land flowing with Milk and Honey ; yet he was to suffer Famine, and wait for it forty years. And Lastly,

Possible ; So there is no Hope in the Damned. It is in those on this side the Grave, quickned by the Living Spirit of God. Though the things they hope for are hard to come by, yet they are possible, and this is like Cork to the Net, keeps the heart from sinking into Dispair ; it being the Balm of all Grief, the Coffin of Fear, and Cradle of Patience.

Secondly, *What are opposites of this Grace?*

Ans.

Answ. Two, 1. *Presumption*; the Unbeliever hopes without ground, and will be invincibly followed by an ill success of his pretensions. The *Rayes of Abrahams Hope* were grounded on a good Title; but men of another Stamp act otherwise; their Hope is an Imposture, a Golden Dream. Like a dying mans Will, that hath neither Seal nor Witness to it: Therein he bequeaths such and such Lands and Legacies to one and to another: but the Will being thus left naked, it signifies little: Such is the hope of a wicked man; it promi- feth him great matters, that all in the Coveuant of Grace is his, Christ and Heaven; but alas, all is a meer Delusion, a Presumption of his own Heart.

2. *Despair*; not *Legal*, which was in *Abraham*, and others; But *Evan- gelical*, notwithstanding all ground of Hope. So *Abraham* did not: *Dis- pair* looks on things through black Spectacles, and gives all for lost; *Hope* doth the contrary.

Q *How is it possible to hope against Hope?*

Answ. 1. Because of the Power of Christ,

Christ, upon which the Soul doth in great Straits, rowl it self. Whatever Lets and Impediments do arise, between the Promise and the fulfilling of it; though they be as high as Mountains, and as the Gates of Hell, yet the Believer can by Faith look upon them all but as Difficulties which cannot check the Power of Christ, but only Magnifie it. For, as jealous Thoughts of the Divine Arm, or fear that it may be encountered with some insuperable opposition, makes the Hope of Promised Good, to be weak and uncertain, so the faithful and serious consideration of Gods Power, a resting upon it, produceth *Hope against Hope*, it turns every *Valley of Achor* into a door of Hope, administers Manna in the Wilderness, and draws water out of the Rock, brings light out of darkness, comfort out of every Tryal. Thus *Miconius* wrote to *Calvin* upon view of the Churches Enemies, reflecting upon the Power of Christ; *Gandeo quod Christus Dominus est, alioquin totus Desperassem*. I am Glad that Christ Reigns, otherwise I should utterly despair. So the Believer in the

G

midst

midst of Straits, rejoyceth in the Power of Christ, who lives and Reigns for ever and ever !

2. The Spirit of Christ inwardly works and nourisheth some Sparks of Hope always in the Hearts of his people. Thus it was with *Job*, *David*, *Paul*, and a vast number of other faithful Souls, who sparkling with the lightning Rays of Hope, have lift up their Palms in the midst of Hazzards, and Gain'd Heaven by Violence, still laying the degrees of their Honour in the depth of suffering. This, like an Anchor, holds the Ship of the Soul in her greatest Storms, and like an Helmet keeps off the Blows of the Sword or Arrows from entering, *1 Thessal. 5. 8.* *Let us who are of the day, be sober, putting on the Breast-Plate of Faith and Love, and for an Helmet the Hope of Salvation.* In time of publick Calamities, the Righteous have Hope. *Joel 3. 16.* *The Lord will roar out of Zion, the Heaven and Earth shall shake, but the Lord will be the Hope of his People.* So that if all outward hope be taken away, their hope in God is not taken away. Upon
this

this account it was, that the Jews being Prisoners in *Babylon*, are called *Prisoners of Hope*, *Zeck. 9. 10.* If Heaven and Earth be ready to come together, yet through the strength of the Divine Spirit working in their Hearts, Believers have *Hope*; which as a Bow in the Heavens all furnished with Emeralds, never loseth it force.

3. Their former Experiences are a Foundation of Hope against Hope.

Rom. 5. 4. ----- And Experience, Hope. Hof. 2. 5. I will give the Valley of Achor for a door of Hope. This Valley of *Achor* (so called from *Achans* Sacriledge, to deter men from Sin,) some think to be the same with *Engeddi*, mentioned so often in the *Canticles*; however, both are neer to *Jericho*, and in it, they tasted the first Fruits of *Canaan*, as an earnest of the rest: in it they saw abundance of Plenty, and were Delighted and Refreshed therewith: all that the Lord did then for his People; and now saith, he will give it to the Church, *for a door of Hope.* A Believer brings in a Catalogue of Experiences; *Psal. 119. 65. Thou hast dealt well with thy Servant!* In how

many Cafes hath he had Experience of God? when Sin and Temptation have been strong, he hath come in with Auxiliary Forces, and his Grace hath proved fufficient. When the poor Soul hath been even finking under Fear, God hath recovered him out of the Quick-Sands, and lifted his head above the deep Water. *Pfal. 33. O Lord thou art my Glory and the lifter up of my Head: When David was in the Mouth of Danger, the Lord delivered him. I was pluckt out of the Mouth of the Lyon; fo Saint Paul. The Believer hath many Experiences and thefe beget Hope. Thou haft and wilt Deliver, faith Experimental David.*

4. By looking on things, not as they are at prefent, or in their own power, but as they fhall be by the Lords promife. Surely faith the poor Believer, *He is faithful that hath promifed:* As he is able to fulfil the leaft *Iota*, of whatever he hath fpoken, fo he is infallible in what he promifeth. As no impediment can arife to hinder his Power, fo no contingency can fall out to alter his Will; all his Promifes being in Chrift *Jesus yea and Amen, 2 Cor. 1. 20.* Thefe

These and such like Meditations serve to uphold and keep Believers from being injurious to God, or themselves, and to believe *in Hope against Hope.*

Use 2. This Doctrine administers incomparable Comfort; whosoever is Christs, is enabled to believe in *Hope against Hope.* When Comfort can neither be seen, felt nor apprehended, when Fears and Distresses are on every side, and all hope of safety is taken away, when nature affords no ground of Hope, or encouragement to expect the fulfilling of a Promise, but suggesting many posing arguments to impede and gainsay the Truths of it, and to make Faith as feeble as their Bodies, when old and Crazy; then to *hope against Hope.*

1. That the Church shall be raised and preserved from so many Enemies, is *against Hope.* 2 Chron. 20. 12. *O our God, wilt thou not judg us? for we have no Might against this great Company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee.*

2. That a Wound shall be Healed;

It is against Hope. *Prov. 18. 14. A Wounded Spirit who can bear?*

3. That many and strong Lusts shall be vanquished and subdued; *Rom. 7. 24. O Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me, from this Body of Sin and Death!*

4. That an impure Soul shall be prepared for and received into Heaven; it is against hope; yet see *Isa. 1. 18. Come let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your Sins be as Red as Crimson, I will make them white as Snow. --- To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.* Oh, strive for this Heavenly Hope.

Q. How may it be Attained?

A. As other Graces are wrought, so is this. It is the work of God; wherefore he is called, *The God of all Grace, 1 Pet. 5. 10.* He is the first Planter, the Promoter and Finisher of Grace. God is called the *Father of Lights*, and he must light up this Candle in your Souls.

More particularly, it is obtained,
1. By *Experience, Rom. 5. 4.* as David argued, *1 Sam. 17. 37.* And Holy Paul, *2 Cor. 1. 20.* Experience breeds Confidence. *Thou hast, thou shalt,*

is

is the ordinary argument used by the *Psalmist*. And so the Church comforted her self, and Nourisheth her Hope, *Lament. 3. 21, 24. This I Recalled to mind, therefore I hope in thee.* And, *The Lord is my Portion, saith my Soul, therefore will I Hope in him.* The observation of Gods Merciful Acts of Providence to his Church in general, as to any of his People in particular, is the way to kindle Hope. 2. By *Patience* and Comfort of the Scriptures. *Rom. 15. 4.* As the Blood and Spirits are conveyed by the Veins and Arteries, so is the Spirit of God by the Word and Promise, helping the Soul to lay hold on *Christ* by *Faith*, which is a Grace, as of Union, so of Establishment.

Q. How may it be known where it is?

Ans. 1. By the Object thereof, God in Christ, things Above; not Means, not Creatures, principally or Terminatively. A man of such hope, dares not pluck off the Crown from the head of Free Grace, or snatch it out of the hand of Divine Power, to set it on the head of any Creature; But he makes God his hope. Thus is *Abrahams* Faith described. G + 2. By

2. By the manner of working. *First*, it begets a Care and Love to Purity. 1 *John* 3. 3. *He that hath this Hope, Purifieth himself even as he is Pure.* As Lightning is to the Air, such is Hope to the Soul; It purifieth the Soul, after an high Strain, *even as God is pure; Secundum speciem*, though not *ad gradum*; i. e. In kind and Quality; though not in Act, yet in desire and affection. Hope purgeth the Conscience *from dead works, to serve the Living and True God.* By it the Soul draws nigh to God, and comes to have a sight and view of him, and is thereby assimilated to him. Proportionable to our Faith, so is our Holiness, and according to our expectations will be our Conversations. *Secondly*, It quickens to Duty, is a Whetstone to Industry. It is Hope that carries the Ship to Sea, and ploughs the Curled Ocean: It is Hope that weilds the Souldiers Weapon, and steels his Helmet: It is Hope that feeds the Sower, even when he seems to cast away his Seed; very Tears are dropt in hope; and so Mournful Souls are led along the milky way, to the Eternal Father. Hope teacheth
men

men to cast Bread upon the waters, where it may be fed and afterward restored. Thus Divine Hope is active in its influence, is as Wind to the Sails, Wheels to the Chariot, and wings to the Bird ; It makes active in Religion, *To Run the way of Gods Commandments*, and never ceaseth, till its object be obtained. The Furnace shall not terrifie a mans hope in Christ : As fire, it is sparkling and Flaming : Though the Winds blow, the Rain fall and Rage, yet *Hope* seated in the Heart of a Believer, as on a Rock, grows up *against Hope*, and so perseveres in expectation, till Charity, that circling endless thing, hath perfected its wings to make its Flight to the Eternal City of Repose, passing the Vail into the Tabernacle of the Sanctuary, where *JESUS* the Forerunner hath made his Entry, for the Salvation of his Faithful Ones.

*Glory be to God in
the Highest !*

The Justice of
G O D
A S S E R T E D ,
I N
Seeming Contrariant
Providences :
And Vindicated from the
Cavils of Corrupt Men
under them.

*Psal. 145. 17. The Lord is holy in all his ways, and
righteous in all his works.*

*Rev. 15 3. Just and true are thy ways, thou King
of Saints.*

London : Printed for *Benj. Alsop*, at the Angel and
Bible in the *Poultry* ; and are to be sold by
James Cowsey, Bookseller in *Exeter*. 1682.



THE
JUSTICE of GOD
ASSERTED,
In Seeming Contrariant
PROVIDENCES.

Job 34. 17.

---- Wilt thou Condemn him that
is most just ?

JOB's Great Afflictions make a great noise in the world ; they Sounded so far, as his Friends at a great Distance from him, hear of them ; whether by the Ministry of good or bad Angels, or of neither, it Skills not. Ill News is swift of Foot, saith the Greek Proverb ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὸ σῶμα, and like ill weather, which comes ere it be sent for. *The Sins and Miseries*

A series of Good People are much talked of, and soon bruited abroad. This brings Job's Friends out of a Desire and Design to Condole with and Comfort him, (the Character of true Friendship, which is suited to a day of Adversity,) though it fell out otherwise; for they tormented him, well nigh as much as Satan himself, though it were of Ignorance and Unwittingly, rather than of ill will or forethought Malice. Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite; all likely Idumeans, and men much esteemed for wisdom, and Godliness; as is manifest in their several Disputations and Discourses: in which they admonish him to Repent; assuring him, that he could be no less than a gross Sinner, and Hypocrite, because so grievously Afflicted, (a great Mistake in them; and usually the Reproach of the world upon the Generation of the Just.) To Answer this, Job now Addresseth himself, though Tormented in Body, Perplexed in Mind, stoutly defending his own Innocency, and seeming to Tax the Lord; as Dogs in a Chain Bark at their own Masters. To this
his

his Friends make a sharp Reply, from the 15th *Chap. to the 22.* and he answereth them again with greater Courage and Boldness than before. Whereupon they begin a second Reply, and the Discourse Continues, till the Parties grew weary of *Job*; who shewed himself a Valiant and Resolute Champion: only as every Pomegranate hath some rotten Kernels in it, so *Job* had his Frailties and out-bursts, Caused by Extremity of Pain and Excess of Passion; and who amongst the best Spirits, in Strange and Heavy Accidents, do not pay some Tribute to the Natural Passions of Men? These Ending, *Elihu*, a stander by, a good Man, steps in, as being all in a Flame, undertakes to carry on the work against and Reciteth *Jobs* Speeches, *Chap. 32.* but not so candidly, and refelleth them, but not so mildly, as was meet. True it was, *Job* in his Heat, had let fall many Lavish Speeches, but yet it was far from him to say, either that himself was without Sin, or that God was unjust, as *Elihu* would bear him down; very unfitly taking some sayings of his, that way Sounding.

ing. Whence may be Noted by the way,

That Words prove not alway what they Intend, but as they are Interpreted.

The words of the best men are not free from straining : they would yield Milk, when they are forced to yield Blood : Inferences may be made upon what we say or do, such as we never thought of. *Arbitror nonnullus in quibusdam Locis Librorum meorum Opinatuos me Sensisse quod non Sensi; aut non Sensisse quod Sensi;* saith *Augustin. Lib. 1. de Trinitat. ad Finem;* and it fell out accordingly; for as *Baronius* Witnesseth, after *Augustins* Death, arose up divers, *qui ex ejus Scriptis male Perceptis, Complures Invenxerunt Errores;* who out of his Writings wrested and misconstrued, brought in many Errors, which they endeavoured to maintain, by the name and Authority of Saint *Augustin*. And the like may be said of *Luther*. Which may teach us to set a Watch over the Door of our Lips; to Weigh our Words in Ballance, to Utter few and Seasonable Words.

Elihu, we see heated, a Fire is kindled

kindled on the Hearth of his Heart; by the Spirit of Judgment and burning, and such as many Waters cannot Quench; Wherein, though *Elihu* was somewhat Faulty, yet because he was right in the main, all was taken well. Noting,

How apt even good men are to mingle Sin with their best Actions; To Plow with an Ox and an Ass; but the Lord is pleased to Consider whereof we are made, and Graciously to lay the Finger of Mercy on the Scars of our Sins; as that Limner in the Story. He looks over what is his, and overlooks what is ours. Where there are no Sins of Allowance in us, there shall be Grains of Allowance to us: he will not cast away his Pearls for every Speck of Dirt.

The Ground of *Elihu's* Anger and Heightned Zeal is mentioned *Chap. 32. vers. 2. because Job justified himself rather than God.* This he did not directly and in so many words, but by a seeming Consequence, and *Elihu* was kindled at it. It is a Blessed thing to have a Stomach for God, to be blown up in his Cause; as were *Moses*, *Elijah*, *Phineas*, *David*, *Christ*, and

H the

the Angel of *Ephesus* ; to be all on a Light Fire with Love to God, and Indignation against all that doth him any Dishonour. All true Zeal is of a Masculine Spirit. *Job* had utter'd some Discontented Speeches against God, which Reflected on his Honour and Justice ; he had despaired of a Restauration, and most earnestly wish'd for Death, and thereby seem'd to Justify himself rather than God, and this *Elihu* could not brook ; and therefore Continues his sharp Rebuke, in this Chapter, to the humbling of *Job*, and Vindicating of God. *Job* was not so Righteous, but that he deserved this Affliction ; as there may be Cause in the very best, as well by Reason of their Actual Prevarications as of their Birth-Sin. *God cannot do Wrong*. It is Inconsistent, 1. With his Nature, *Versf. 10. Far be it from God to do Wickedness*. He cannot Sin. In which Sense only it is said, he *cannot* do this or that ; not through Want, but through Height and Abundance of Power. *He cannot do Wickedly*, because he is Omnipotent. It is for poor Creatures to be Lyable to such Imperfections ; the Divine

Understand

Understanding cannot be a Principle
 of *Direction*, and the Divine *Will*
 cannot be a Principle of *Injunction*, and
 therefore the Divine *Power* cannot
 therein shew it self to be a Principle
 of Execution. 2. It appears from his
 Actions, *Ver. 11.* He is so far from
 doing Wrong to any, that every
 man *shall find according to his way.*
 And although this is not done forth-
 with, yet we may write upon it, and
 Reckon, that, *Non dum Omnium di-*
trum soles Occiderunt; as sure as the
 Night follows the Day, Account will
 come, and God will Reward unto
 each man according to his Works.
 His Providence. like a well-drawn
 Picture that Eyeth every one in the
 Room, observeth all things. Al-
 though one Man may not know ano-
 ther, nor any man know himself, yet
 God, following as it were all men
 hard at the Heels, doth with his eyes
 narrowly observe and mark what way
 every man Walks in, he seeth all
 his doings. And let none please
 themselves in their Sinful Practices,
 as if God did not see them, because
 for a time they escape unpunished:
 for Sin and Punishment are tied to-

gether with Chains of Adamant, and cannot be long asunder. 3. His *Will* doth evince it; *Versf. 12. Godwill not do wickedly.* He can do whatever he will do: but he cannot do Wickedly because, for want of good in Sin, it cannot become the Object of his *Will.* *Job* had said as much before, but then he seemingly dasht all again, with his Inconsiderate Complaints and Murmurings; and this *Elisha* could not bear, but again and again Celebrates the *Righteousness* of God.

This whole Chapter is a Golden Flood of Grave Discourse; an Elegant Oration; if we Consider the matter or the manner; It is a Diamond set in Gold. Each line in its place, is adorn'd with the Enamel of Divine Affection, which breathes through the Discourse.

Here, as in a Mirrour, is the Lords Righteousness presented; his Justice is displayed in most orient Colours. And when *Elihu* hath done all he can, he seems to say, as *Cicero* once did of *Crassus* and *Antonius*, Roman Orators, If any man thought he had spoken too much in Commendation of them; he must needs be such a one,

as either knew them not, or was not able to judge of their worth.

The Text is one single demonstration of Gods Justice, carried on in an excellent Metaphor: taken from binding up the Wounded, after the manner of Chirurgeons: And then the words are translated by some thus; *An qui odit justitiam, Chirurgos imitaretur?* Would he that hateth Righteousness, do as Chirurgeons use to do? Would God, if He were Unrighteous, bind up the Broken-Hearted, or receive into favour, as he doth, a Sinner that Repenteth, doing him good again, as if there had never been any breach between them? It is noted, that a *King* hath his name in the Greek Tongue from *healing*, *Ἀράξ* ab *ἄρος*, *Medela*; and that *Isa. 3. 7.* A Governour is called *Healer*, or Binder up; its the same word here in the Text. But how unfit for such an Office, must he needs be, who doth not only, not do Right, but hates it? As did *Nero*, *Caligula*, *Commodus* and others, enemies of Heaven and Earth.

--- And wilt thou Condemn him that is most Just?

(8)

gether with Chains of Adamant, and

NOTE

This volume
tight binding and
effort has been m
duce the centres.
result in d

academ
microforms

25/10

has a very
and while every
made to repro-
s. force would
damage

emic

ns

as most Just?

H 3

None

gether with Chains of Adamant, and cannot be long asunder. 3. His *Will* doth evince it; *Versf. 12. God will not do wickedly.* He can do whatever he will do: but he cannot do Wickedly because, for want of good in Sin, it cannot become the Object of his *Will*. *Job* had said as much before, but then he seemingly dasht all again, with his Inconsiderate Complaints and Murmurings; and this *Elisba* could not bear, but again and again Celebrates the *Righteousness* of God.

This whole Chapter is a Golden Flood of Grave Discourse; an Elegant Oration; if we Consider the matter or the manner; It is a Diamond set in Gold. Each line in its place, is adorn'd with the Enamel of Divine Affection, which breathes through the Discourse.

Here, as in a Mirrour, is the Lords Righteousness presented; his Justice is displayed in most orient Colours. And when *Elibu* hath done all he can, he seems to say, as *Cicero* once did of *Craffus* and *Antonius*, Roman O-rators, If any man thought he had spoken too much in Commendation of them; he must needs be such a one,

as either knew them not, or was not able to judge of their worth.

The Text is one single demonstration of Gods Justice, carried on in an excellent Metaphor: taken from binding up the Wounded, after the manner of Chirurgeons: And then the words are translated by some thus; *An qui odit justitiam, Chirurgos imitaretur?* Would he that hateth Righteousness, do as Chirurgeons use to do? Would God, if He were Unrighteous, bind up the Broken-Hearted, or receive into favour, as he doth, a Sinner that Repenteth, doing him good again, as if there had never been any breach between them? It is noted, that a *King* hath his name in the Greek Tongue from *healing*, *Ἀναξ* ab *ἄνος*, *Medela*; and that *Isa. 3. 7.* A Governour is called *Healer*, or *Binder up*; its the same word here in the Text. But how unfit for such an Office, must he needs be, who doth not only, not do Right, but hates it? As did *Nero*, *Caligula*, *Commodus* and others, enemies of Heaven and Earth.

--- And wilt thou Condemn him that is most Just?

None in his right Wits will do so. This were for man to exalt himself above the Divine Majesty, and for the dribbling River to vye with the Drowning Ocean. And yet what do they less then this, who grudge at Gods proceedings, and are ready to think, if they had the ordering of things in their own hands, they could dispose of them a fair deal better? As *Alphonse King of Castile*, the Ointment of whose name is marr'd with the dead flie of his Atheistical Speech, *That if he had been in Gods stead, he would have disposed the World better than it is.* Christians beholding the Lords severer Dispensations against them, their budding Flowers opened in a warm day, shut again in a Cold one, and their flowing Tides to become ebbing Waters; God cloathed as it were with darkness, and they not able to cleave the Clouds to behold him walking on the Vault of his Palace, nor trace him in his beamy walk through the midst of the Sanctuary, among these *Golden Candlesticks* which have long suffered a dimness; are apt to conceive that the Lord deals not well with them, and they deserve

deserve better from him, God might have been a wiser and a better God. Blasphemy is the fruit of Discontentment. Let none charge God foolishly. The Text will teach us to be better Commentators upon Providence, *viz.* Even to *justify God in all his sayings*, and to give him glory in all his doings, by our silence or Admiration.

The *Summa totalis*, or sense of all, falls into this entire proposition, *viz.*

Whatever mens apprehensions are, God in all the ways of his Providence towards the whole World, is a most just God.

God is most just. A universal Proposition. So he was, thus he is, and so ever shall be: The Creatures shall be dissolved into nothing, and men as they are, into Falsities; But God will be found *just* for ever.

I shall first endeavour to explain this truth, and afterwards confirm it.

For *Explication*, know, that one may be said to be *just* three ways,

1. *Obedientia Activa*, by Active Obedience, and that Voluntary and Perfect; both *extensively*, in Regard

of the *Object* ; and *Intensively*, in Regard of the *Subject* ; So, Christ alone is said to be just here ; his Heart and the Law were Unisons ; answering each other as Face answereth Face in a Glass. And the Saints shall be hereafter ; when the Imperfect Lineaments of Grace in the Soul, shall by the Pensil of the Holy Ghost, be drawn forth in their orient Beauty, and the Vermilion of Glory be laid upon them.

If it be Objected, *That the Saints are said to be just here ?*

I answer, true. *Joseph* is called a *just man*, *Math.* 1. 19. so were *Zachariah* and *Elizabeth*, *Luke* 1. 16. said to be *Righteous before God*, &c. But to be understood,

1. Not *Legally* ; for Righteousness of *Creation*, whereby God made man after his own Image, in Holiness and Righteousness, to walk exactly according to the Rule of Justice. Perfect man was then, though mutable, because his Holiness depended upon and flowed from a Principle in himself, Original Justice ; now lost ; and so, *none is Righteous, no not one*. But,

2. *Evangelically*, viz (1.^o) In *Desiderio*

siderio & Conatu. The Saints do Level at the mark of Perfection. They hunger after compleat Righteoufness : whence it is said, *they Sin not*, *John* 3. 9. because though they be not without Sin, yet their Wills is against Sin ; they have voted it down. When they fail , they mourn ; and this is called Gospel-Righteousness. (2) *Comparative & Respectu Impiorum* ; in Respect of the Wicked ; and so *Noah* was said to be perfect in his Generation ; he being Compared with the Prophane World, was a Perfect, just man. Gold in the Oar, Compared with Lead or Brasse, is perfect ; a field of Wheat may have some Thistles growing in it, yet Compared with that of Tares, is perfect Wheat. (3) *Divina Acceptatione.* God doth accept of them in and through Christ, *Colos.* 2. 10. *Ye are compleat in him* : Through the Red-glass every thing appears red ; so through the Red glass of Christs Blood, the gracious Soul appears lovely and Beautifull in Gods eye. They are accepted in the Beloved, *Ephes.* 1.

2. One may be said to be just ,
Gratia,

Gratia, by Grace; as the Elect and Called are *just*: *Iustitia unionis Imputata*; by the Righteousness of Christ Imputed, *Jer.* 33. 6. This is as truly theirs to justify, as it is Christs to bestow; and this is a Christians Triumph, when he is defiled in himself, he is undefiled in his Head; in his Righteousness the Saints shall shine brighter than the Angels. Or, *Iustitia communis Inherente*; viz. the Graces of Christs Spirit, Holiness of Heart and Life; which *Cajetan* calleth *Universal Righteousness*.

3. *Natura*, by Nature, and so two wayes. 1. *Dono*, by Gift; as *Adam* was by Creation. His will (which is the Universal Appetite of the whole man) was Wonderfully good, Furnished with several Habits of Goodness, as the Firmament with Glittering Stars. There was in him a propension to all good; as an Instrument in Tune, he was full of Harmony; like a Bright Air and a pure Beauty without the least Cloud to stain it; his Heart was without the least Tincture of Impurity; as Wine that hath no Sophistication. Such was *Adams* Holiness. But this is not
now

now to be found on Earth, we must go to Heaven for it. 2. *Essentia*, by Essence; and so God only is just. Righteousness in God is as Beams in the Sun, Water in the Fountain, and Lines in the Centre, it is Original: he is the Pattern and Prototype of all Righteousness; just *ad intra*, as he is; just *ad extra*, as he works; every way just.

Some may understand the first only, as *Osiander* would every where; others the latter only: I conceive both may and must be here understood: God is just in *himself*, and in all his *Ministrations* to the Sons of men.

Again, He is said to be just,

1. *Qui justa facit & imperat juste*; So doth God, who never Acted or Commanded any thing, but what was in it self equal and reasonable; although perhaps to our shallow and corrupt Understanding it may appear otherwise; as to our eyes, Turrets and Steeples, how upright, soever, if their height be exceeding great, do oftentimes seem crooked, and look as if they stood awry: But all Gracious Hearts discover that Beauty and Equity in all Gods Commands,

mands, as draws forth their Assent and
and Consent to them ; they can say,
Blessed be God for his Precepts ; *His
Commands are not Grievous.*

2. *Qui opera quadrat adjuris Præcepta* ; So doth God, whose Will is
the supream Reason ; *Nec Reſta ſolum, ſed & ipſa Regula* ; not only right,
but the very Rule of Right ; And im-
poſſible it is for him to do wrong, by
erring from the Rule of Righteouſ-
neſs. Men may overſlip themſelves,
and miſcarry or deny Juſtice, in which
caſe, Appeals have been made to God ;
as in the time of *Hen. 3.* The bold
Counteſs of *Arundel*, Appeal'd from
the King and his bad Counſellors,
to the Court of Heaven. And in the
History of the *Holy-War*, Relation
is given of a *Templar*, who being to
be burnt at *Burdeaux*, at the place of
Execution, he ſaw the *Pope* and King
Philip looking out of a Window, and
cryed to them, *Clement* thou Cruel
Tyrant, ſeeing there is no higher a-
mong Mortals to whom I ſhould Ap-
peal for my unjuſt death, I cite thee
together with King *Philip*, before the
Tribunal of Chriſt Jeſus, the Juſt
Judg, who Redeemed me ; there,
both

both to appear within one year and a day, where I will lay open my Cause, and Justice shall be done without any respect : And it fell out accordingly.

3. *Qui promissa servat* ; So doth God : He is faithful *that promised*. One letter of his name, whereby he hath made himself known, is, *Abundant in Truth* ; And Christ is called *the faithful and true Witness* ; And the Counsels of God are said to be *Faithful and True*. He so much abounds in it, as he hath no mixture of the contrary ; though the best of men have some ; as for example ; A precious Stone, hath some speckling or cloud, but light it self admits of none. God is light, and with him is no darkness at all ; so God is true, and in him is no Falshood at all. *God that cannot lie hath promised*, saith the Apostle, *Titus 2*. God may delay his Promise, but he cannot deny his Promise.

4. *Qui suum cuique tribuit, iustitia distributiva* ; So doth God ; He gives to every man his own. It is Injustice and Tyranny to invade another mans Right : An Evil, which
cannot

cannot be imputed to God without Horrid Blasphemy.

But to come nearer ; we may consider God under a fourfold notion, and in each shall find him *Just*.

1. *Ut Dominus*, as Lord ; in respect of his purpose, touching man to be Created, of glorifying his Mercy and Justice, Wisdom and Power ; in Saving, Damning, calling effectually, denying others ; chusing, refusing, reprobating ; Where it is not safe to search too far ; *Quod nesciatur sine Crimine, ne discutietur cum discrimine* ; nor strive to know with danger, what we may be ignorant of with safety ; in such things, admiration is better Piety, than apprehension ; (Curiosity is the first spawn of Sin) nor to judg that unjust, which Reason apprehends not. Of all his Decrees, we may conclude, *There is no Unrighteousness with God.* Rom. 9. 13. *Jacob have I loved*, &c. Let not Carnal Reason dare to reprehend what it doth not apprehend. Let none forbid Faith to swim, where Reason cannot wade. Banish *Sociinian* Blasphemy, which will needs have a Reason of Divine Mysteries.

Except

Except they see, they will not believe; whereby Faith is become, as some of that sort of men have made bold to call it, *Theologorum Ludibrium, Scripturarum Tyrannidem.*

2. *Ut Creator*, with respect to the Means of Execution. Giving being, permitting the fall, Ordaining and Governing by his Providence, preserving and disposing both the good and bad. All these are just, 2 *Tim.* 4. 14. *The Lord reward him according to his Works.* Math. 5. 45. *He maketh the Sun to shine on the Evil and Good.* In which, he is at an Infinite Distance from Unrighteousness: for in these he moves according to the Council of his own Will, and this is ever Rational; though our shallow Reason in this State of Degeneracy and Mortallity, be not able to Fathom the Depths of its Contrivements, and is thereupon ready to Cavil and Call in Question their Equity.

3. *Ut Pater Electorum*; by special Righteousness, viz. *Goodness* in his Decrees, and *Faithfulness* in his Promises, two principal Emanations of the Divine Being, Respecting his Intellectual

tellectual Creatures, whom he hath taken into so neer a Relation to himself; all which he justifies, for and by the Obedience of his Son, who is Constituted by the Father to be the Head of all his Elect, to be his Members, and to be by him brought to eternal Blessedness. See 1 *John* 1. 9. *If we Confess our Sins, he is Faithfull to forgive.* The word [*Faithful*] refers to Gods *Promises*, as [*Just*] doth to the *Blood of Christ*, the Ransome received, whereby the Saints are Cleansed; And it stands not with the Divine Justice to demand the Debt twice, viz. of the *Surety* and the *Debtor*; but upon Confession he is *Faithful and Just to Forgive.*

4. *Ut Judex*, as a Judg, to distribute Rewards according to Works; 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. This is the exactness of that Divine Justice which Triumphs in God. The World is a great Book consisting of many Leaves and Pages; This Judg will peruse every Leaf, Page, Line, and Tittle of it; and make the great *Index expurgatorius*, blot out the names of thousands, take a sunder this

this whole Volumn, cast much into the Fire, bind up the rest as a perfect Volumn of elect ones for Eternity.

Revel. 1. 7. all the World shall see their Judg, their Crimes, their Accusers, Conscience, and Satan, if out of Christ, or if believing in him, then *Pardon* sealed with the Blood of the Judge, their *Heaven* smiling in his Smiles; *Revel.* 20. 12.

In three things he agrees with upright Judges, *viz.* 1. In Loving Justice and hating Iniquity. *Job* is said, to have accounted *Justice his Robe and Diadem.* Chap. 29. 14. and of *Trajan* that excellent Prince, that when he gave the Sword of Power, to any whom he made Governour of any Province, he used to say, *Accipe hunc Gladium, si benefecero, utere pro me sin aliter, contra me.* It was from this Love of Justice. Of *Fabricius* a Senatour of *Rome*, it is recorded as his *Encomium* and left as his mark of Honour, that a man might as soon turn the Sun from its Course, as turn him out of the Course of Justice. From this very Principle it was, that *Aristides* obtained the Report of the *Just* from all in his time. Now if

this be so true of men, how much more must it be true of God. *The Righteous Lord loveth Righteousness. Psal. 33. 5. He Loveth Righteousness and Judgment !*

2. In Impartiality and Equality, hearing all sides. *Plutarch* reports of *Alexander*, that when he sat in Judgment, he was wont *alteram aurem prebere Actori, alteram vero integram servare reo*, alway to stop one ear to the Plaintiff, saying he kept that for the Defendant; one mans tale being good, till another be told. *Aequum me utrique parti in Disceptandis Controversiis quam Invenienda Disciplina praebebo*; said *Justinian*; I will hear both Causes &c. And this is a Rule observed by God; *Gen. 18. 21. I will go down and see, &c.* Spoken according to our *Dialect*, after the manner of a Judge, who first examines the Cause exactly, before he will give the Sentence. God doth not make the *Sword* the Judge; he Weighs things in the Ballance; he ever lyeth Judgment to the Line; When God is on a work of Justice he is not on a Riot, as if he cared, not whom he did hit, but goeth in the
Way

Way of a Circuit, with the Offendor,
I will go down and see!

3. In passing Sentence without respect of Persons. The Just Judge fears no mans Condition in Judgment, he beholds not the faces of any persons, but the Cause; Like *Melchizedeck* he is without Pedigree, This *Son of Righteousness* shines on Beggars as well as on the Nobles. *Job 34. 19. God accepts of no mans Person;* No not the Persons of Princes; *Prov. 24. 23. Kings and Nobles must come to his Bar, and receive Sentence, as well as poor, Inferiour Persons. He will do Justice upon men, be they what they will be. Jer. 22. 24.*

But in three things, he surpasseth all, *viz.*

1. In *Authority*, which is derived to him from none. He is Lord Paramount and hath *Potestatem* and extends to all. *Gen. 18. 25. He hath Jus Imperii, and Jus Domini;* which none can have, but subordinately & derivatively from him: His Kingdom ruleth over all. His Name written on his Thigh, is *King of Kings*. As among men, it is one of the *Jura*

Regalia, the Flowers of the Crown to enact Laws and Statutes; it is much more true of God.

2. In *Liberty*: He is not tied to Law, in respect of time manner or measure. The greatest and best Judges on Earth, do or should govern by Law, to the making of which others concur as well as they; But God is a Law to himself. He and none but he can write on his Imperial Edicts, *Stat per ratione voluntas*, My Will is my Law, (which is Liberty in God, but Tyranny in man) his Will because of the Holiness of his Nature, is always just. He can better say than ever *Constantine* that *Arrian* Emperour could, *Quod ego volo, pro Canone sit*; Let my Will be your Sovereign Rule; sith things are Right because I will them, I will not because they are Right.

3. In *Infallibility*. He cannot err in deciding Controversies and Causes; being Omniscient, nothing is hid from him, but all things are unveiled to his eye. He is never at a stand. No ignorance dwells in his Understanding. Fair Shews can never delude him; Colourable and False Reports

Reports cannot mislead him, as Earthly Judges may be. He can never acquit any, who is in truth faulty or inwardly unsound, nor upon any false suggestions pass Censure upon any. He proceeds only upon certainty. Let the Papists conclude the Pope or his general Council infallible and so fit to decide Controversies in matters of Religion; but we must believe that all Mortals are more or less subject to Error and Uncertainty. If *Moses*, *Aaron*, and *Samuel*, were among the best Magistrates, Priests or Prophets that ever were; they could not satisfy in all things, either some Unrighteousness would be in them, or they, though innocent, will be justly accounted suspicious.

Thus much only for Explication of the Doctrine;

For *Confirmation* thereof I am now to address my self: Which I do not intend to make as the Cords of a Tent stretched out to their utmost length, or unnecessarily to enlarge, as the *Pharisees* did with Affectation their Phylacteries; yet for the more full establishing thereof, it will be pertinent to speak unto three things, *viz.*

to prove it by *Authority*, and *Argument*, and to clear it from *Objections*.

First, for *Authority*; which though some do impiously Question, yet to us it is sufficiently and Invincibly binding. And this the Scripture doth diversly, *viz.*

1. *Affirmatively*; when it describeth God to be Just, Holy, Righteous (*Exod. 9. 27. Psal. 27. 17. Jer. 12. 1.*) all sparkling Jewels of the Crown of Heaven, with which it flourisheth; and which, however diversified in our Conceptions, are notwithstanding Identified with Gods essence, which is but one, though to us they appear to be different from each other, and all from it; as the vast Ocean, though but one, receives divers names from the several shoars it washeth on; so however, Justice, Holiness, Righteousness, be several Names Suited to different Operations, yet all are but one Simple Act in God, under those various Denominations.

2. *Negatively*; when it removes all Injustice and Iniquity from him; (*Deutr. 32. 4. 10. 17. Dan. 9. 14.*
Rom.

Rom. 9. 14.) Righteousness is the Embroidered Robe wherewith God is Cloathed. It is the Glory of the Godhead. *Exod. 15. Glorious in Holiness*, is his Name. Darknes cannot be Imputed to the Sun ; no more can Sin to God. You may as soon Separate weight from Lead, or heat from Fire, as *Righteousness* from the *Divine Nature*.

3. *Affectively*, When it Attributes to God, the Affection of Zeal, Anger, Fury, &c. as *Exod. 20. 5. 32. 10. Numb. 11. 20.* which are not in God such Passions as they be in men ; but an act of immutable Justice, and are not to be understood *secundum Perturbationis affectum*, but *secundum Ultionis Effectum*. Anger and Wrath in God, is nothing but *Tranquilla Constitutio iusti Supplicii* ; a Calm and quiet Appointment of just Punishment, revenging Justice. And the same Justice of God, as it simply burns against Sin, is in Scripture called his *Anger* ; when it doth more fiercely *ex candescere* or sparkle out. it is called his *Wrath*. The same *Justice* when it pronounceth Sentence, is called his *Judgment* ; when it is

brought to Execution, it is called his Vengeance: all directed against Evil.

Thus we see the Truth to have an Innate Proof, shining with its own Beams: and by this, it should prevail over mens Minds, vanquish unbelief and chase away the Clouds of Error. But,

Secondly, For *Argument*. Though the Scripture like the Sun-beams, are their own Discovery, yet one may contract them into three Glasses, wherein we may take a clearer View of them, and perceive a warmer Influence from them falling on our Minds and Hearts. The Arguments grounded on the former Authority are these following, viz.

1. God is *Agens liberrimum*, a Debtor to none, bound to no Law, because none was ever given to him, therefore he cannot offend in distributive Justice. *Matth. 20. 15. Is it not lawful for me to do with my own as I will. Rom. 9. 21. Hath not the Potter power over the Clay, to make one Vessel to Honour and another to Dishonour; i. e. He may lawfully, he hath full Authority so to do:*
That's

That's the meaning, and so runs that expression in the Hebrew Text. *Jer.* 18. 16. *Cannot I do as this Potter;* And *Gen.* 34. 14. *We cannot do this thing*, i. e. We may not do it; It is unmeet, unlawful for us to do. Now this God can do, it is lawful, by Right he may. However by this awarding *Paribus imparia*, unlike proportions to men of like Conditions, considered in the same Lump and doing this arbitrarily, according to the good Pleasure and Counsel of his own Will, sets men a crying out of Iniquity in Gods proceedings; yet it is without reason and with great Injustice, for God is free; and besides, his Will is the supream Rule of Righteousness.

2. He is *Fons Justitia*, Justice it self, the original of Righteousness, and it is impossible for him to do, or be the Author of Sin. Out of this Fountain cannot proceed sweet Water and bitter; no more than whiteness can black the Wall, or heat make one cold. Every thing is just, because God doth it. He cannot do that which is contrary to his Nature. He cannot Lie, because he is Truth it self. God
cannot

cannot Sin, because he is perfect Righteousness.

3. He is *Judex Mundi*, as *Abraham* said, Gen. 18. 25. *And shall not the Judge of the World do Right?* It is *Abrahams* acknowledgment of God in Covenant. He adems the World and shall judge the World. These are attributed to him interchangeably, *to make and judge the World*, And he certainly will do Right. We may as easily suppose God to cease from being Judge of the World, as cease to do Right. He is the Maker and Monarch of all men: who is his Superiour? To whom shall he give account? Who shall expostulate with him for Injustice? Or for fear of whom should he warp? He can cease to be, as soon as leave to be just. The Apostle improves his very reason, to demonstrate the Righteousness of God; *Rom. 3. 5, 6. Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance; God forbid; How shall God judge the World?* It being an Office exclusively belonging to him, by reason of his independent habitual Justice. *He shall judge the World*; that's a received Principle; from whence he infers that

that therefore God cannot do unrighteously. See *Jer.* 11. 20. 2 *Thessal.* 1. 6.

Thirdly, we come to clear this Doctrine from *Objections*; for this Bright and Shining Truth is very Offensive to sore Eyes; as the most Evangelical Discoveries are not without Fierce Oppositions. It is the Devils work to Imprison all Truth, but the nobler and more pretious Truths, must expect to be put in the lowest and darkeſt Dungeon; as here now the *Justice* of God; the Flower and Crown of Heaven; how would he eclipse this Fair Sun! And,

I. It is Objected, *That God did Ordain some of his Creatures to Punishment and Damnation, without Fault and Desert.*

Anſw. Divine Purposes are very unsearcheable, they lye wrapt up in everlasting Darkneſs and are covered in a deep Abyſs, none can Fathome the Bottom. Yet to this Objector, I ſay, it is moſt falſe: and a Calumny uſually caſt upon the Doctrine of *Predeſtination*; and which the Rhetorick of our Adverſaries, is wont to blow
up

up to the highest pitch of Aggravation even to the Impeaching of Gods Justice which is most Blasphemous; But to the Answer,

1. God Created man for his own Glory, *Ultimately*; and if any Miscarry through their own Default, (as it will be found they do,) God will be glorified in them as well as in others. The Howlings of them which perish, shall render forth his Praise, as well as the *Hallelujahs* of them that are Saved. They both sing unto the Glorious Attributes of the Blessed Trinity an everlasting *Canticle*. Only in this great Consort of the Intelligent Creation, the designedly Conspiring Voices are as differing as the Condition of the respective Singers. Hell's Darkness shall as well contribute to Gods Glory, as Heavens eternal Splendours. As shadows Judiciously placed, do no less praise the Painter, than do the livelier and better Colours.

2. In Ordaining, he is to be Considered as a Lord, not as a Judge. Election and Reprobation being Acts of Power and Prerogative: so that in these the matter of Right and Wrong

Wrong are not concerned. Gods Volitions and Decrees are not depending on any temporal Objects, as Motives thereunto; but determine without any Respect to any Disposition in the Creature; and what Injustice can be therein? The clay should not dispute with the Potter. None should argue against Divine Prerogative. *Ratio quosdam elegit & quosdam reprobat, non habet rationem nisi Divinam Voluntatem.* Aqu. 1 part 4. 23. Art 5.

3. He doth punish none without fault, nor condemn any without Desert. God who is pure Justice, inferreth no prejudice upon the Creature, but as provoked by some Criminal miscarriage; though it be certain, that the Reprobate shall dye, yet *Sin*, not the *Decree* is the cause of Death. *Rom. 5. 12. By Sin Death entred into the World.* To crown or to damn is an Act of judiciary Power, and proceeds according to the Tenour of the Revealed Gospel. The Eternal Decree of the Damnation of the very *Devils*, was never determined to be Executed otherways than for their own Misdeeds.

2. It

2. It is objected, *The Author of Sin cannot be just. Ergo.*

Answ. Innocency it self cannot be protected from Imputations ; though the Reproach will stick no faster, than a Bur that is cast against a Cristal ; for it will easily appear, that God is neither *Autho* or *Actor Peccati* : He makes Sin no more than the Sun makes the Night. Though *Bellarmin* labour to impose this Blasphemy on *Calvin*, *Beza*, and *Zuinglius*, as their opinions ; Yet the *Dominicans* and some of his own Society, clear him, as saying, 1. That he willeth Sin *permissively*, otherwise it could not be, *Miro & ineffabili modo non fit prater ejus voluntatem, quod etiam fit contra ejus voluntatem ; Quia non fieret nisi sinerit, nec utique nolens sinit, sed volens : As Aug. Enchirid.* And again, *Non sinerit bonus fieri male, nisi Omnipotens etiam de malo posset facere bonum. Ibid.* The Lord thought it better to do good with evil, than not to permit it : And it is acknowledged, that Sin the worst thing that is, but the Existence of Sin is not Evil ; otherwise saith *Aug.* God would not permit it.

2. God

2. God concurs *ad Actum & Determinationem voluntatis in particulari, non ad obliquitatem Actus*. God doth concur to the Action and sustains the Agent ; For 'tis said, *by him all things consist*. Coloss'. 1. 17. and *Acts* 17. 28. *In him we live and move, &c.* *κινῶμεθα*, we are acted by him. So that the bare Action is good and the fault wholly remains with the Creature.

Obj. *But he that doth not hinder Sin when he may, is guilty*. So a wicked *Murcian* asketh, why the Lord who foresaw the event, did suffer *Eve* and the Devil to confer, and if he were able, why did he not hinder Sin to be.

Answ. Thus men presuming upon certain Axioms of Crooked and Distorted Reason, will undertake to pass Sentence upon God. The Rule will hold true in Respect of men, *qui non vetat peccare, cum possit, jubet* ; but not in Respect of God, who is bound to no Law ; neither did he suffer Sin unreproved or unpunished. *Prosper and Hilarius* both, with *Augustin*, make answer to this Question, *why God did*
not

not hinder Sin? the cause may be unknown, it cannot be unjust.

3. It is Objected; *God doth Distribute unequally, evil things to good men and good things to evil men.*

Answ. This is a bad and common Charge. The seeming Disregard and Inequality of Providence, hath caused some to charge God foolishly. Among Heathens of old, we find *Brutus*, an able Assertor of Divine Providence, such as he knew; when finally vanquished by *Antonius* and saw such bad Success in so good a Cause, as he thought his to be, disclaimed all Vertue and derided all Endeavours of living well, as vain and bootless. And *Pompey* when discomfited by *Cesar*, blamed Providence, as if there were a Mist over it. But both blamed the Sun, because of their own sore eyes. And these well-tempered Heathens were not alone, but men of other make have stumbled at the same Stone. It was *Dauids* Case, *Psal.* 73. 2. 3. *As for me, my Step were almost gone, my Feet had well nigh slipt, for I was envious at the Foolish* &c. and the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Chap.*

12. 1. *Why doth the way of the Wicked prosper &c.* Which is as though he had said, Why shall such Weeds as Cumber the Ground be watered so plentifully and grow so exceedingly, when good Corn is so thin and Lean? Why shall the Lyon and Raven, those unclean Creatures, be spared, when the innocent Lamb and Dove are Sacrificed? The wicked flourish, like a Bay-tree, and enjoy a Constant Spring and Summer, though without Fruit, when the Saints, like good Apple-trees, have their Autumn and Winter? This hath touched good men to the quick; sore eyes could not behold the glorious Sun-shine of wicked mens Prosperity, without much pain. But however God is just. Therefore to answer the Objection, I say, he that doth so finally, is unjust. *Difert nunc Deus, non Determinat*; God will have men to be known. Some serve him only for a Livery; dayes of Adversity are Gods fans or Furnace; *non Approbat facta Impiorum*; he approves not the ungodly in their wayes; though at Gods Connivance and present Immunity of their Hellish Practices, they

K

make

make damnable Inferences of his approving them. *Because they have no Changes, they fear not God.*

Object. 4. *Suppose two persons for natural Disposition Equal, the one is taken and effectually called, the other left; is not here Respect of Persons?*

Ans. Here is more hubbling up of Carnal Reason against Divine Dispensation: the same Answer occurs here for Substance, as to the former.

1. Certain it is that these two Terms, *Righteous Judgement*, and *Accepting of Persons*, are differently Opposite. But here is no *respect of Persons*: the Working of God, on which the Object is founded, is *actus Potentie Libere, potius quam Justitie*, an act of free Power, rather than of Justice. And Divines have received it for a Principle, That *Accepting of Persons*, is not found in *Gratuitis*, in Acts of Bounty, wherein the Donor is at Liberty to dispose of his free Gift, as pleaseth himself; but in *Debitis*, in Acts of Justice and Righteousness, wherein lieth an Obligation on him that Distributeth, to give every

every man his due. Hereon they Conclude, that in Divine Choice, God is no Debtor to any of his Creatures, but Acteth therein, not as a Judge, but as a Sovereign Lord and Liberal Benefactor, choosing some, and passing by others; as without Injustice or Wrong to any, so without shew of accepting of Persons, *Augustin* disputing this Question largely against the *Pelagians*, brings in the Instance of a man that hath two Debtors, of whom he forgives one, and requires full Payment of the other; if any demand the Reason, he answereth, *It is my Will*: and so God giveth Effectual Grace to one and not to another, this is his *Free Power*.

2. It is just, because according to his Will and Wisdom. *Rom. 9. 18.* *Therefore hath he Mercy on whom he will, &c.* And therefore not unjust, because hidden to us. If this do not satisfie, I shall refer such to consider what one of our Antient Writers did to their Forefathers; *Heron in Epist. ad Ctesiphontem*, viz. The Apostle, saith he, having discoursed of this Mystery, acknowledgeth their depths, and adoreth the Wisdom of God in them;

Dignare & tu ista nescire ; concede Deo potentiam sui ; nequaquam te indiget Defensore : Be thou also willing to be ignorant of such things. Leave God to himself in medelling of his Decrees and Dispensations ; he will be sure to do it so, as not to stand in need of any Apology or Defence from thee !

4. Objected it is , *What Justice is it in God, to command a man by his Word, the performance of which cannot be done by him, without the inward help of his Spirit, and yet in the mean while, deny that help of the Spirit to him ?*

Ans. Fair words ; but a trick whereby men of towering Thoughts labour to bring the Royal Prerogative of Converting Grace, into the hands of sinful Clay, and so derogate from the honour of him who is the Former of all things. But must it needs be a blemish to Gods Honour and a stain to his Justice, to command man to perform his Duty, though he have no strength to perform it ? Once he had strength, and hath lost it ; but God hath not lost his Right to command, though man hath

hath lost his Ability to obey. A Drunken Servant is not disobliged to serve; nor a broken Merchant to pay his Creditors. It is a Right Rule to be observed in unknitting this Knot; *Mandata Dei, non sunt Mensura nostrorum virium, sed Regula Officii & materia precum*; as Molinus *Contr. Amyrald.* Precepts and Exhortations, ordinarily signifie the approving Will of the Commander, and his Duty to whom they are propounded; although sometime the Duty of the Hearer, rather than the Will of the Speaker, be declared by them: They shew us what we ought to do, not what we can; they assure us what God will do when he pleaseth, not what he is bound to do. Grace is free. Neither can any Creature challenge essential Grace at Gods hands, as a due Debt, either to his Nature or his Labour; however some sawcily will e and speak of God, as if he were bound to do this or that, to give this or the other Grace, even where he can produce no Promise; by which he hath made himself a Debtor. Commandments are the zeal of Peter *L. 1. c. 1. Lib. 1. Sextum. D.*

stinct. 43. against such men; Ut mihi videtur, hoc verbum [Debet] venenum habet,---nec Deo proprium competit, quia non est debitor nobis, nisi forte expromisso. To me, saith he, this word [he ought] or, he is bound, seems to have much poison in it, and cannot properly belong to God, who is no Debtor to us, save only in those cases, wherein he hath passed some free Promise. And I am sure, our Saviour tells his Disciples plainly, It is given to you to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, to others it is not given, Math. 13. 11. And the Householder in the Parable, stops the Mouths of those Murmurers that repined, as expecting more from him than it was his pleasure to give, with the sole consideration of its being his Will so to have it, Friend I do thee no wrong, &c. Math. 20. 10, 13. Dei judicia nemo plene comprehendit, nemo juste reprehendit.

5. It is Objected, God commanded Abraham to kill his Son.

Ans. 1. He may do that, which he hath forbid us to do; as appears out of *Dent. 24. 16.* Compared with *2 Kings 14. 6.* For although by an express

press Law, Magistrates be forbidden to put Children to Death for their Parents Sins; yet God, who is the Author of Life and Death, hath reserved to himself a Liberty of so doing, whensoever it shall so please him, by Reason of his supream Dominion over all; and therefore for him to Inflict inferiour temporal Punishments in that case, cannot but be accounted just; and the rather, if we Consider, that Children may be accounted part of their Parents; for as a mans Wife is himself divided, so his Children are himself Multiplied.

2. Gods command to *Abraham* was but *Mandatum Expirationis*, not *Seductionis*, a Command of Tryal, not of Seduction. God is said to *Tempt*, when he puts us upon the Trial of our Faith and Obedience, that he may do us good in the latter end, *Deut. 8. 26.* but to *Seduce* he cannot be said to do. The Author of *Good*, cannot be the Author of *Sin*: as before is *Noted*.

Object. Did he not bid *Shimei* to curse *David*!

Ans. True; as a Punishment on

K 4

David

David; but it was a Sin in Shimei; his end was to drive David to Despair, but God directed it to Humble him.

6. It is Objected; *How it could stand with Justice in God to set forth his Innocent Son to suffer?* From this the Socinian party cry out against us, as if God were charged with Tyranny, in laying the Punishment of Offenders on our Innocent Saviour; which also drew from *Brentius a Lutherum*, this Blasphemy, *Deus Pater in cruce Tyrannus egit erga Filium*, &c.

Ans. To which I answer, 1. It was with his Will, which is the Rule of Justice with Reference to his Infinite Wisdom. *Dei est iustitia, nisi quia Voluit, quare non tam quæ Voluit, sed quare Sapientia dicatur.* *Dei Voluntas est semper licet non Causa.* This was concluded on as the most Congenious and convenient mean to manifest Mercy and Justice; an excellent Temperament so that one doth not oppose the other. God will not let Sin go unpunished, therefore he provides a Lamb to be Sacrificed for *Isaac*; a Mediatour to come

come between us and Wrath. However Reason do most gainsay this Mystery, we must say, *Taceat ista Mulier in Ecclesia*; Let this woman hold her Peace in the Church. Hear what the word saith, and believe; *Christ suffered that God might be just*; Rom. 3. 26. If this will not Satisfie, I answer farther.

2. Christ may be considered two wayes, *viz.* as he is in himself a Natural Body, without any Relation to us; and so no action of his concerned us, nor any of ours concerned him; or as he is part of a Body Mystical; in which Consideration, his Actions and ours concern us jointly: for if the hand be Wounded, the head will say, you hurt me. Thus we read, *1 Cor. 12. 26. If one Member suffer, all the Members suffer with it.* For in this Relation Christ stands to his People by Verue of that gracious Covenant made between God the Father and Christ the Son, and secretly transfused between them, before the Creation of the World. From which Union between Christ and his Members is produced that which Divines call *carissimam Unionem*, a mutual Communication

munication of Properties; which work extends it self so far, as that the Perfections and Excellencies which are Originally peculiar to the Person of Christ, are Communicated unto, and truly affirmed of holy men; 1 Cor. 1. 30. and so the Infirmities, yea the Sins of his Members, are Communicated unto and Affirmed of, and Imputed to Christ. *He was made Sin for us*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. though in the same Breath, the Apostle saith, *He knew no Sin*; both which are most true; because our Sins are his Sins, by Reason of this Union: as the Debt of the Principal is also the Debt of the Surety. In which Sense, Christ is said to be slain from before the *Foundation of the World*, Revel. 13. 8. even before he was Incarnate; because of *Abel*, who was his Member and Type. Christ suffered for the Sins of his People, which are his Sins in that himself and Members are one; and no Injustice doth appear as to this Ministration.

7. It is objected; *Good men are swept away in common judgments, as the wicked are.*

Ans. Outward things come alike to
to

to all. So *Solomon* ; to Saints as well as Sinners. What they say of *Temper*, that *Non datur purum elementum*, there is no pure, unmixt *Temper*, that is strained and sublimated and as it were framed into such an *Harmony*, that it hath always an healthful *Predominancy*, but mixt, and whereby *Diseases* break in ; the like may be said of *Divine Dispensations* towards the best of people ; there is a mixture in them ; the Saints are not ever singled out as *Objects of sensible Mercies*. Their *Sun* oftentimes sets in a *Cloud* ; their *Ship* in common *Tempests* is overwhelmed ; But,

1. It is not so always. *Noah* and *Lot* shall be standing *Witnesses* thereof, so long as the *World* shall stand. They were standing *Monuments* of *Gods Preservation*, in the then *Ruins of the Worlds Desolation*. Though an *Housholder* spend and sell the greatest part of the *Harvest Crop*, yet he will be sure to preserve a little *Seed-Corn*, to sow his ground for a new *Crop*. Though *Sodom* be utterly destroyed by *Fire*, yet *Jerusalem* is as a *Brand pluckt out of the Fire*.

Fire. God maketh a light account of a whole City full of Sinners; he takes away the ungodly of the earth like dross, *Psalms* 119. 119. which is put into the Fire to be consumed. His own people shall be preserved. Though he make a full end of all Nations, yet he will not make a full end of his people, but correct them in measure. He will have *some* to be Monuments of his Mercy, for in the midst of Judgments he will be loved, as well as feared in his smiles.

2. Never as the wicked are; though in Afflictions, and National Calamities especially, God oftentimes seems to make no distinction between the Objects of his Compassion and Fury, indiscriminately involving them in the same destiny; yet his *Intention* makes a vast difference, where his *infliction* seems to make none: As when on the same test, and with the self-same Fire, Chymists do urge the Gold as well as the blended Lead; but withal foreknowing and designing such a disparity in the Events, as to consume the ignoble Minerals, or blow them off into Dross and Fumes, and make the Gold more pure and full

full of Lustre. Even so doth God in his severe Dispensations towards his people in common with the wicked; to the one they are destructive, to the other Purgative, *Isa. 27. 9. By this shall the Iniquity of Jacob be purged,* &c. When the evil of Affliction overtakes a wicked man, it is to take away their Soul; when it comes to a godly man, it comes only to take away his Sin. A rotten cleath if it be scour'd and rub'd, it breaks and tears; but a piece of Brasse well scour'd, will shine the brighter; Judgments on wicked mens false hearts, break them, but the same on good men, amend and better them.

Thus you see the Objections are but as opposing the shadow to the light, and a lye to truth; and how they who go about to put out the truth of God, by smothering, make it burn the brighter. Neither indeed was it ever possible for the enemies of *Gods Righteousness*, by all their Engins to compass their Design; all the vapours of mens Brains, are not able to cloud so bright a Sun. The use of all follows.

And, 1. This Doctrine, like a direful

direful Comet which carries with it Blood and destruction, speaks dread and terroure, and it hath a double aspect;

1. On the whole Land in general, and so it sadly threatens, Considering,

First, What is done by us. Sinful we are to astonishment: that of the Prophet may be applied to us, *Hear O Heaven, and Harken O Earth, I have brought up Children, and they have Rebelled against me!* Secure we are, fearing no evil, setting light by the means, vapouring out the good Spirits of a pleasant Land, in a *vain Conversation*. Our Calm and peaceable Gospel dayes have brought forth in us Spiders and Caterpillars, and the like Vermine, even Pride, Luxury, Prophaneness, Atheism, Spirits averse to the power of Godliness, and a sound Reformation; Witness that general Apostacy to Formality, Will-worship, and strange Inclinations to Popery, and such-like innovations: and which is a great aggravation to shew our inexcusableness, God hath been correcting us, to amend us, but we have been the more vile and sinful. *Hos. 7. 1. When I would have*

have Healed Israel, then the Iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, &c. Zeal is exceedingly decayed, the word suppressed, and Religion meets with much snarling and opposition every where. How impudent is Sin grown? God looked for purging of the Land, and behold it is more defiled. When the Pot boyleth the Scum is discover'd. Baths bring forth Corruption (if it be in the Body) into the Skin: God hath been reforming the Land; and our Wickedness appears the more. Time was when Sin began to be ashamed, to creep into Corners, to be out of Fashion, but now it is grown brazen faced, walks in the open Streets, seems to be in request more than ever. Thus our Sins *testify against us*, are grown up to Heaven, and darken the Sun, put out the Moon, seal up the Constellations, to intercept the passage of Prayer thither, and to stop the influences of the light of Heaven from descending hither; or to knock at the Gate, to sollicite for vengeance upon us.

Secondly, what the Lord hath done to others so offending; even took away his Glory, and gave them up into
to

to the Enemies hands; bringing them into a Spiritual *Egypt*: Witness the famous *Asian* Churches now under the *Mahometan* Tyranny. There was a time when the Vineyard, *Isa.* 5. 4. should have afforded *red Wine*, and then it might have expected Watering every moment, and Continued Preservation, but this Vineyard Degenerating, instead of *Red Wine*, it brought forth *Wild Grapes*; and then instead of keeping, the Lord threatened to take away the Hedge, and pull down the Walls thereof: instead of Preserving it from hurt, to let it be eaten up, broken down, instead of Watering, to command the Clouds to yield it no Rain.

Thirdly, Considering, what he hath done amongst us; how he goeth on by Degrees. *God is just*, and when the Number is up, the rod will certainly fall; when the Corn is ripe, the Sickle is prepared. Though he break not the Candlestick, he may, for ought we know, remove it, and not leave so much as any quality, title or Property of a Church; he may deal with us, as he did with *Ephesus*; and who knows but that the Lord hath

hath said of us in this Nation, as he did of the old Church of the *Jews*, *Deut.* 32. 32, 33. *Their Vine is the Vine of Sodom, &c.* Sure I am, he hath already begun to cut the Vine, till it bleed ; and if Repentance steps not in to turn away Wrath, he may be provoked to say to *England* as he once did to *Palestina*, *Jer.* 2. 21. *I Planted thee a noble Vine, wholly a right seed ; how then art thou turned a degenerate Plant of a strange Vine unto me ?* And not only loan us out, but set us to whole-sale ; and make the Kingdom an Holocaust to his just Indignation.

2. On the prophane and ungodly in special. This Doctrine is to them an Arrow sent from Heaven, Feathered with Wrath and headed with Ruine. It is a hand from Heaven, an Alarm from thence. Considering,

First, what the Lord hath threatened, *Deut.* 29. 19, 20. *The Lord will not spare that man, he shall not escape.* Do not think the Lord to be a God of Clouts, one, that however he speak heavy words, yet will not do as he saith ; say not with them in

L *Isa.*

Isa 5. 13. Words are but *Wind*; and with them in the Gospel, *God forbid*! Do not fancy to your selves a God made up wholly of Mercy, and so act arbitrarily, living as you please: for verily you will find, he hath blows as well as words, and that the cry of Sin, will most certainly be followed with the eccho of Wrath. Clouds contains the showers of Rain that fall on the earth, and so do Threatnings contain the Judgments that pursue Sinners. As in the *Revelations*, you never read that the Heavens opened, but some great matter followed; so it is here. *Hath the Lord spoken, and shall he not do it?* Verily, his word shall not pass away unfulfilled!

Secondly, what he hath done, to the *Old World*, *Sodom*, *Achan*, *Ahab*, *Saul*, *Herod*, and such like Sinners against their own Souls. He hath made Arrows of all Wood, and vengeance of all Creatures to punish their Demerit, he hath fallen upon them more swift than Tempests, Eagles, or impetuous Storms. They are so many visible Sermons, and speak the determinations of God,
real

feal Stories to be read by you, that you may not become Stories for others to read. *Then shall he speak to them in his Wrath, &c.* Behold these examples in a way of particular application, as bringing Tidings of Ruine, and saying, *Unless you Repent, you shall all likewise perish.* As Judges use to hang up notorious Offendor in Chains, to be a terrour to all Spectators, so hath the Lord done with many obstinate Sinners; he hath Thundred and Lightned over their rebellious heads, none of them were able to resist his Justice.

Thirdly, Considering what you have deserved; even to be delivered up to a *reprobate sense*, Rom. 1. 28. to *Believe a lye*, 2 *Thes.* 2. 11. to be *turned into Hell*, where your Horreur and Lamentations should be the Musick of Gods Justice, and the Heraulds of his Righteous Severity to all Eternity.

Object. *But shall we be so dealt with?*

Ans. Yes, without Repentance and speedy turning to God. It is but as he is just, he will find you out. The Rocks and Mountains shall not be

able to shelter you from the Wrath of him that sits on the Throne. May the terrours of God prevail with you! O be importunate with the most High to cut the thred of your Wickedness, that you may not spin it out to a full Length. Put to your own strength to break off the Match between you and Sin, and Sue out a Divorce; *Break off thy Sins by Righteousness*, saith *Daniel* to *Nebuchadnezzar*. Cut this *Gordian Knot*. If you have any Generosity of Spirit, any sparks of Sobriety, consider your latter end; now begin to sound a retreat, fold up your Ensigns; It is not too late, the door of Grace is yet open. Protest not to persevere in Mischief, like Devils. There are none but enraged Spirits, that will be healed by the Experience of their own ill, and bury themselves in their ruin. Wise men alwayes make a Medicine for themselves of others Folly.

Use 2. This Doctrine sounds most incomparable Comfort to all the beloved of God, and called unto Holiness; Considering,

First, what he hath promised;
Prov. 28. 13. *Isa.* 1. 18. *Ezek.* 18. 22,
 25, 26.

25, 26. 1 *John* 1. 9. &c. These are a Nosegay of sweet Flowers taken out of the Scripture-garden; make use of them; Let your Meditation, like the Bee, suck the sweetness of them. They'll prove as Bezar-stone to keep you from fainting under your Sins and Sorrows. Get more acquaintance with them, O Ye Sons of Adoption. Be not like unskilfull Lapidaries, little valuing the worth of such Orient Pearls, which are the Riches and the only Treasure of the Heirs of Glory, on this side Heaven. Suck at these Breasts; take Courage from those Heavenly Influences.

Secondly, Considering what he hath done. He hath been Mindfull of his Covenant, neither will he forget. *Heb. 6. 10. God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of Love, which you have shewed towards his Name, in that ye have ministered to the Saints, and do minister. 2 Thess. 1. 6, 7, 8.*

You have three sure Foundations to build upon.

1. You have his Attributes of Justice and Truth. Whatever he hath promised, shall be performed. His

promise may lye a long time, as Seed, under ground, but it is all the while a Ripening. Shall not God be true? If not, who shall? He will be so far from coming short of his word, that he will better it. He often shoots beyond the Mark of his Promise, never short of it.

2. His immutable purpose; 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. *The Foundation of God standeth sure, &c. and, The Gifts and calling of God are without Repentance.* It cannot be said of God, as it is of man, that though his Goodness be sweet, yet it is short, though he can do enough for us, yet his mind may change or his Promise be broken; No, as he is liberal in all his expressions, so he is unchangeable in his intentions of your good. Where he loves, he loves ever.

3. You have his Seal and Earnest, *Ephes.* 4. 30. 2 *Cor.* 5. 5. called the *first Fruits* of the Spirit, *Rom.* 8. 23. as *Israels Grapes in the Wilderness*, were the *first Fruits of Canaan*; what pledge can be more certain than the *Earnest of the Spirit*: *Ephes.* 1. 14. If this Foundation fail, you may well say with the Prophet *David*,
Why

What shall the Righteous do? But sooner shall the huge Rock be broken into bits, and thrown as Pebbles and Cockle-shells upon the Shoar, by the violence of Waves; sooner shall the Mountains that God hath set fast by his strength, be overturned by the breath of Tempestuous Winds, than the Promises which are founded upon the immutable Power of God and his never failing Goodness, be in the least Iota made void and of none effect.

Now as some kind of Artificers, after long poring on a piece of black work, finding a dimness in their eyes, are wont to take an Emerald, or some other green thing, by the verdure whereof they may be refreshed, and their Spirits cheered; thus Believers when dulled and puzzled with the consideration of sad, strange and contrariant Events in the World, may for their spiritual Relief, make use of this Cordial, these considerations laid before them, their Lustre will be exceeding cheering to the eye of Faith.

Use 3. Hence is offered something of *instruction*; and that diversly:

L 4

First,

First, In matters of *Contentation* and submission to all his Dispensations. Providence is the best *Herauld* to Marshal us, and we ought to sit down content, without murmuring at Gods disposing Justice. Thus *Job* practised; *The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, &c.* *Mauritius* the Emperour, when his Wife and Children were Murthered before him, and his own eyes afterward bored out, uttered this Speech, *Iustus es Domine & Recta judicia tua*: Thou art Righteous O Lord in all thy ways. That we are spared it is his Mercy; that we are punished, cannot be unjust. However things go in the World, could we have hard thoughts of Sin, all our thoughts of Gods dealings with us, would be most honourable.

Secondly, in matter of *Imitation*; and so,

1. For *Magistrates*, in executing Justice. Here's a Copy for them to write after. See the Rule, *Deut. 1. 16. Judge Righteous Judgment, between every man and his Brother.* Justice is the Soul of Judgment. An unjust Judge, is a Solecism, a contradiction. God will do Justice upon men,
be

be they what they will be ; so must Magistrates execute Justice impartially. They must be the Law enlivened ; they must be ἐμψυχοὶ εἰκόνες Θεῶν, as *Plutarch* speaks, Living Images of God ; who when he is in the greatness of his Power, is *most just*. Though he could check all the world that speak against him, yet he will do *righteous things*, *Psalms* 48. 10. *Thy Right Hand is full of Righteousness*. Gods Right Hand is an emblem of of his strength, and it is *full of Righteousness*. Thus should men be exalted to highest place of Judgment, they should be *full of Righteousness*. It is not enough that Justice be in the Laws, but it must be in the Judges too , else no honour , no security of a Kingdom : Justice in the Law , is like Gold in the Mine , which while it is there only , doth no man good ; but when in the Magistrate , it is like Gold coined, for Use and Honour.

2. For *Ministers*, to declare his Righteousness, and not to fear for any Amazement ; Concealing it before great men, covering those Sins with Silence

Silence which they know them guilty of. *Greatness* must not be a *Buff-coat* to any mans Wickedness. We know Physitians and Chyrurgeons (and so Ministers) are sometimes allowed to be Cruel. The Lapping up of the Pills of Reproof, in much Pap and Sugar, by allaying the bitterness, frequently the Operation is frustrated. Ministers must not Coraplement Souls into Hell. They must not scast mens ears, but Wound their Hearts ; not lick the sores of great ones, and Bite the Sores of poor ones. This is not just. *Nathan* did not so ; nor *John* the Baptist before *Herod*, nor *Paul* before *Felix* ; nor *Chrysostom* before *Eudoxia*, nor *Ambrose* under *Theodosius* ; nor *Bernard* it seems by his Discourse to *Eugenius*. Let no Sinister End divert you from the Publication of Gods Justice. It is a work of your Place and Office. It was the work of Christ, of his Apostles and Ministers in all ages. O, manifest some Sparklings of this *Diviner* Spirit, because so like that which appeared in those Transcendants among Preachers. *Lo I am with you !*

3. For *People* in all their earthly Transactions

Transactions. As one wrote to *Egidius* Abbot of *Norinburg*, concerning the 119. Psal. *Hæc non sunt Verba solum Legenda sed Vivenda*; so may I speak here to you; these things are not spoken and Written to be heard or read only, but to be lived. *This, the Grace of God which hath appeared to all men, teacheth you.* A Duty as necessary to Salvation, as that which immediately refers to God himself. *Moses* came out of the Mount with both Tables in his Hands; the Second as well as the first. They must go both together; one stone in a Mill will do but little good. A Bird cannot Fly with one Wing. Many please themselves with a Single Conscience towards God in the first Table of the Law, having little Regard of the second towards man; this Argues little Sincerity. You must give God and men their due: Practice *Righteousness*.

Use 4 And lastly, The Use is for *Reformation* and Preparation to meet the Lord, *Amos* 4. 12. The Lord is just and the Judgment day is at Hand. *Currat ergo Penitentia, ne præcurrat Sententia*, saith one. *Mit-*
tamm;

tamus Preces et Lachrymas Cordis Legatos, saith another. Hasten, hasten to meet the Lord with Entreaties of Peace. By hearkning to his Word, believing and doing it; by Humbling your selves under his Rods, or at the Report of his Judgments. And to this end,

1. Cast away your Sins, every man his Idols. Come out of the crooked Paths of Pride, Hypocrisy, Oppression, Barrenness and whatever is contrary to Godliness.

2. Give your selves to Fasting and Prayer, and Mourning, *Joel 2.12,13, 17.* Perhaps you may find Compassion. Who knoweth but that the Lord may Return and leave a Blessing behind him.

3. Put on Christ, and take him in your Arms. *Zeph.2.1, 2, 3.* Gather your selves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired: Before the decree come forth, before the day of the Lords Anger come upon you. *Rom. 13.12, 13.* The day is far spent, the night is at hand: Let us therefore cast off the Works of Darkness, and put on the Armour of Light. Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering

(95)
*Chambering and Wantonness, not in
Strife and Envyng. But put ye on the
Lord Jesus Christ. ----- This is the
Garment with which you may come
boldly before the Lord.*

FINIS.
